

THE GUARDIAN

A Literary Monthly Published In Philadelphia

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MEDITATION

On Reading "A Story Teller's Story"

BY WALDO FRANK

One must approach this book in the spirit of reverence, in the spirit of mystery — as one approaches a child. It is no book for critics. Let the critical come after. If one begins by analysing Sherwood Anderson, one will not receive him; and all one's analysis will go for naught. Let him lodge in us, ungrudgingly: not till then let our intellectual questionings have play.

For this volume is one of testimony; and it testifies to the still infantile revelation of Our America. What would have happened in Europe if the naive confessionals of convert Franks and Gauls and Goths had been analysed ere they were accepted? Anderson's book is a naïf relation of fresh religious values: a groping toward Apocalypse in our own inchoate terms. Woe to us if we do not nurture this in the childlike simplicity and wisdom of the man who gives it!

We shall create a Scripture in our land. And of the stuff of Scripture is this blundering book. Scripture it is not. It is not hard, clear, strong enough for that. It is to our new Scripture possibly as were the lost Songs of the Wars of the Lord to the long subsequent Torah — or as the pre-Vedic psalms to the Rig-Veda — or as the stammering testimonies of the Christians who preceded Saint Isidore from the Rhine to the Guadalquivir, to that Mediaeval Scripture of Abaelard, Albertus Magnus and Aquinas. It is source: a living, inchoate source. We must let it speak in us and for us, ere we may grow beyond it.

From the molder-heap of Nineteenth Century America rise flames of longing and dance their moment in the air. Then they

A STORY TELLER'S STORY, by Sherwood Anderson, New York, Huebsch, \$3.00.

return into the womb of smoke, lost, fetidly lost: warming the molder-heap, drying it, preparing it for the divine Bon-fire which America shall become. There is still too much damp muck; we cannot burn yet. We can get ready to burn.

Such is the burden of Sherwood Anderson's book. It is a playing of wistful flames over the dank muck-heap. There have been other flames — hardier, greater. Either they came before our modern muck-heap; or they played upon its edge. The flames of Thoreau, Melville, Poe, the fire of Whitman stood clear enough away to cast their light to Europe. Anderson's flame is more modest. But it is at the heart, not at the edge of the molder. It does not light Paris or London. It helps warm *us*: it helps prepare the muck-heap for the great Bon-fire. Its value lies in its inwardness, in its humble staying.

All the tale of this story-teller is a tale of little inward creeping tongues of fire. His father — the sweet braggart; his mother, the unsentimental saint; Judge Turner, Nora the servant girl — all of them but the fragment flames of that other fragment, Anderson himself. He flickers through America's chaos: licking, curling, dancing, smoking, fainting. He is not organic. He has no body and no eyes. He ignites nothing. He warms, he lessens the wet, he cleanses the stench of the Muck-heap. After, the Bon-fire.

When we have accepted him, we can place him. And by this means, we can place America. Looking upon this man's nature, listening to his words, above all noting the dull beat of his feet, we realize what a task this is — to make America into a holy land. Elijah and Amos wrestling with their spawn of idolaters and backsliders, the Judges and the Prophets swearing to force that pack of stubborn shepherds into the Word of God, had a task no harder, no more divine, than ours who would make America into a holy land. If you have doubts, here is a book to strengthen your despair: if you have hesitation in your need to accept that despair and to transcend it, here is a book to hearten you in its portrait of a man's mysterious emergence.

For whence came Sherwood Anderson? and what had he? If this be not God in his blinded eyes, in his blundering step, in his stratified failures — upward, upward — then God is not immanent on earth. Not intelligence, not shrewdness, not cultural impulse, moved this man. To the end, he will be deaf, dumb, blind and wilful. A writer of stories, he believes that craft is an end! he does not even know that the newborn writer has forgotten craft even as the newborn babe has forgotten his heart and his lungs. A writer of stories, what does he see? Ohio lives spiritually in his tales, but not in this tale of himself. He comes to New York, a man well past forty. Can you say that he saw even one sky-scraper? even one person? High men, low men, bitter men and sweet dance in equal delirium before his eyes. He goes to Europe — a pilgrim-

age through the grey detritus of his own youthful readings about Europe. So he has gone through life: so in a true aesthetic form of chaos he has created his Book. A creeping flame searching in muck and drench for the dry brand, striving so wistfully hard to catch on, to ignite. And at the end, still the young tongue of flame.

I spoke with a profound literary Critic from England, of this book. He disposed of it with ease: it was pointless and endless, it lacked form, it lacked clarity of image and of thought, it gave nothing of Ohio, nothing of New York, it was vague in describing the associates of childhood, the transitional years, it had no true word about the artists encountered in the East. The European mind could not touch the flavor of this revelation. What it saw as muddle is search, what it saw as evasion is truly wistful effort to contact.

Pregnancy. Luminous maze. This world through which Sherwood Anderson wanders and gropes is not Fog of his mind, it is the amniotic fluid of our world. There is the wisdom and the power of the germplasm, lodged in the womb. All the book's false notions about our sociological problem, about art, about Europe, about the men and women whom its author met, cannot persist against his plasmic wisdom and his plasmic power.

Sherwood Anderson, in the old days, used to sing of the gods — the new gods coming out of the corn into the streets of Chicago. Primitive gods they were; almost phallic in their simplicity. Mere trunks of power, moving; mere conveyancers of life greyly luminous into the builded blackness of our cities. Sherwood Anderson is such a god, himself. There must be many such, ere the new *Elohim* once more grow into the new Jehovah.

THE PYRAMID

A social comedy in one act

BY LAWRENCE LANGNER

CHEOPS	Pharoah of Egypt
SEMIROPIRIS	His Wife
HENTSEN	His Daughter
AMNEPHIS	Vizier of Egypt
NEK-KET	High Priest
MUNT	Chief Scribe to Pharoah
TETHMOSES	A Physician and Reformer
KIB-KO	Chamberlain to Pharoah
KORA	A Dancing Girl

A SACRED CAT, TWO ETHIOPIAN MUSICIANS, TWO SOLDIERS,
AND ATTENDANTS.

SCENE

The Great Throne Chamber of Pharoah's palace in the reign of Cheops, of the IV Dynasty, about 400 B. C.

A vast gaily-decorated apartment, the walls covered with paintings in brilliant colors representing the achievements of the Royal Dynasty.

The throne itself is a massive granite structure. Viewed from the audience it is at the left hand end of the chamber, and is faced by the entrance to the room at the right hand end. That side of the chamber which faces the audience is entirely open, except for a low balustrade or parapet, above which is seen in the distance, across the white sands of the desert, the great Pyramid of Cheops, which is only partly built. It is surrounded by wood scaffolding and somewhat resembles a modern engineering undertaking, a net-work of blocks, beams, hoists and ropes.

Columns of black marble, carved to represent wolf-headed Wepwawet and falcon-headed Horus, support the roof-beams of the chamber. At the left wall, near the throne, towards the front, is a small curtained door, which leads to the private apartment of the queen. In the wall, at the left, between the throne and one of the columns, is a middle portal which leads to the entrance to the palace.

AT RISE: Cheops, Pharoah of Egypt, a somewhat hen-pecked autocrat, and Semiropiris, his queen, handsome and shrewish, are seated on the Great Throne. At the feet of Cheops sits Munt, a sleek oily-tongued scribe, with papyrus and writing material before him. Soldiers guard the entrance. In the centre, a slave girl is dancing to the accompaniment of two Ethiopian musicians, each playing a number of instruments. At the end of the dance, the girl prostrates herself at the feet of the throne.

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CHEOPS — Whence comes this slave, Munt?

MUNT — (*rubbing his hands*). She's a little birthday present for your Majesty, from the Lord of the Northern Archipelago.

SEMIROPIRIS — (*disgusted*). Another gift! Every time a neighboring territory becomes overpopulated, we're inundated with presents of slave girls!

CHEOPS — (*who is rather fond of dancing girls*). My dear, we can't complain. I think she dances rather well.

SEMIROPIRIS — Nonsense. The woman has no allure. She isn't even attractive enough to be a priestess.

CHEOPS — (*timidly*). But, my dear, we ought to keep her. She's imported. Perhaps we can find room for her in the palace.

SEMIROPIRIS — (*with finality*). So long as I am your wife, Cheops, there will be no dancing girls in this palace.

CHEOPS — My dear Semmy, your attitude on the subject of dancing girls is rather absurd. I'm a King—and, after all, a King must follow the traditions. My people expect it of me. Look at father. He had four hundred concubines. He was a national hero.

SEMIROPIRIS — You're not your father any more than I'm your mother. We'll give this girl to Munt.

MUNT — Your Majesty's generosity is even more than excessive.

CHEOPS — Rise, little one! Your dancing is not ungraceful.

SEMIROPIRIS — (*to Cheops, cuttingly*) Indeed? Since when were you an authority on dancing? Young woman, the first thing you should do, if you really aspire to perfection, is to reduce. Hips like yours have been passe for years.

DANCING GIRL — Yes, your Majesty?

SEMIROPIRIS — (*patronizingly*). I owe my own figure, one of the most graceful in Egypt, considering I'm the mother of ten, to standing for twenty minutes after each meal, and abstaining from all starchy foods.

DANCING GIRL — Thank you, your Majesty.

MUNT — (*to Cheops*). Your Highness, unless the Imperial Government can see its august way to increase my humble salary, she will have to abstain from eating anything at all. The upkeep of your Majesty's gifts is enormous. (*Exit musicians, followed by slaves.*)

CHEOPS — It is quite impossible for me to increase your salary, Munt, until the Pyramid is finished.

SEMIROPIRIS — (*with disgust*). That eternal Pyramid! Will it ever be finished? We sit here, waiting for years, dressed in rags (*pointing to her magnificent robes*), while all your money goes into that colossal tombstone—and your ten daughters can wait until the crack of doom to find husbands, for all the help you give them.

CHEOPS — (*meekly*). They all take after you, dear. They don't need any help.

SEMIROPIRIS — This is no time for jesting. Our daughter Hentsen is over twenty. Do you want her to go wrong?

CHEOPS — (*alarmed*). No. That is—not before she marries.

SEMIROPIRIS — Very well. Then I warn you, Cheops, if you don't look out for her future, you will soon have to look out for her past.

CHEOPS — What do you mean?

SEMIROPIRIS — Only yesterday, she was found in the home of a handsome young man, who was taken ill working on the pyramid, and when I scolded her, she had the impudence to say she was doing Social Service work.

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CHEOPS — Social Service work? What in the name of Horus is that? Is it a new religion?

SEMIROPIRIS — I'd never heard of it myself. She says it's something new that people do for the good of humanity.

CHEOPS — (*angrily*). The good of humanity! Do not the gods work for the good of humanity? How dare she interfere in their affairs?

SEMIROPIRIS — (*shrugging her shoulders*). What can you expect—when a girl has no husband?

CHEOPS — No daughter of mine shall permit a suppressed emotion to become a public nuisance. Munt, bid the Princess Hentsen attend on me immediately. (*Exit Munt small door, front, left.*)

SEMIROPIRIS — Do you think our daughter will pay any attention to us?

CHEOPS — If she doesn't, she shall be flogged into a proper respect for her parents. (*Enter Munt, small door, left.*)

MUNT — Your Majesty, the Princess Hentsen is at present engaged in the ceremonies of bathing the Sacred Cat.

CHEOPS — Is Pharoah to be kept waiting for that confounded Cat?

MUNT — The Cat is nearly dry, your Majesty. The Princess bade me tell you she is finishing off its back, and will be here in a moment.

CHEOPS — We must certainly find her a husband. Make a memorandum of that, Munt, so that I won't forget it. (*Munt proceeds to inscribe the papyrus. Enter the Princess Hentsen, a gushing young girl with an affected manner. In her arms she carries the Sacred Cat, quaintly bedecked with colored ribbons.*)

HENTSEN — Hello, Papa. Doesn't pussy look perfectly sweet? Did ums have a nice bath, pussy?

CHEOPS — (*sternly*). I didn't summon you here to discuss the toilette of that animal. Your mother tells me you were found yesterday, alone, in the home of a common workman.

HENTSEN — I was trying to do good, Papa.

CHEOPS — Is that an excuse for compromising yourself with a handsome young man?

HENTSEN — I was trying to *enjoy* doing good. The High Priest said I should.

CHEOPS — Your mother is right. It is time you were married.

HENTSEN — Thank you, Papa. It's perfectly darling of you to take such an interest in me, but I really don't want to marry.

CHEOPS — (*amazed*). Why not?

HENTSEN — I don't think I could express myself adequately through marriage. I am not the type.

CHEOPS — I don't understand a word you are saying.

HENTSEN — I don't expect you to, Papa. Some women were never meant to be mothers. I am the artist. I demand the spiritual—not the flesh. There's something very unoriental about me, Papa!

CHEOPS — There is only one known remedy for your condition, my child.

HENTSEN — What is that?

CHEOPS — A husband.

SEMIROPIRIS — The Prince of Setes will make an excellent match.

MUNT — Your Majesty forgets the Prince already has seven wives and fifty children.

CHEOPS — Pharoah can remove all obstacles.

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HENTSEN — I shall not marry the Prince of Setes.

CHEOPS — And why not?

HENTSEN — He has no soul.

CHEOPS — How do you know?

HENTSEN — No man with fifty children can have a soul. If I marry at all, it must be to an idealist, one whose love will be etherial—spiritual. Isn't that so, pussy?

SEMIROPIRIS — I don't think our daughter should marry the Prince of Setes, if she doesn't love him.

CHEOPS — But only just now you said—

SEMIROPIRIS — As usual—try to put words in my mouth. I understand Hentzen's feelings. All your father thinks about and talks about is the business of building his Pyramid. And when he's finished work at the end of the day, he's so tired out that he can do nothing better than spend the evening watching a crowd of vulgar low dancing girls. He cares nothing for culture.

CHEOPS — Don't I? Haven't I endowed all the public libraries?

SEMIROPIRIS — Yes—and you make the people work so hard they have no time to read. (*To Hentzen*) To show how little your father cares for literature, my dear, one of our most famous poets once wrote a poem about me, all beautifully inscribed — on a slab of green marble. Your father struck him on the head with it, and killed him on the spot.

HENTSEN — Father—you Philistine!

CHEOPS — (*rising*) Are you two women going to drive me insane? (*A clatter of horses is heard outside. Enter the Chamberlain.*)

CHAMBERLAIN — Your Majesty, the Grand Vizier and High Priest await your pleasure.

CHEOPS — Bid them enter!

SEMIROPIRIS — (*to Hentzen*) Quick! Hide the cat. If the High Priest sees you, he'll never stop cursing! (*Hentzen pushes the cat into a box. Enter Amnephis and Nek-Ket, two elderly gentlemen, through main entrance, right.*)

AMNEPHIS — (*dramatically*) Your Majesty, your Empire is in dire peril. The Aristocracy of Egypt, headed by the Prince of Setes, is on the point of open rebellion. The Prince himself waits in the courtyard with an ultimatum. If you do not give him immediate satisfaction, his army will attack the palace forthwith!

CHEOPS — This is a nice thing to happen on my birthday. Where is *my* army?

AMNEPHIS — At work on the Pyramid.

CHEOPS — How long will it take us to mobilize the army and put it into first class fighting condition?

AMNEPHIS — At least three months, sire.

SEMIROPIRIS — There! That cursed Pyramid!

CHEOPS — Well, I believe in peaceful methods, Amnephis. We must be reasonable. What do they want?

AMNEPHIS — They want to wage war against the Babylonians, sire. They are bored to death with nothing to do.

CHEOPS — Nothing to do? Why don't they work on the Pyramid?

AMNEPHIS — Your Majesty, since the execution of the thousand dishonest contractors, the building of your tombstone offers no inducement for intelligent men. Besides, your Majesty, there is a principle at stake. How

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can we expect the common people to respect the aristocracy, without wars from time to time, to prove their value to society?

HENTSEN — Oh, Papa, I hope you won't have a war. It's so old-fashioned!

AMNEPHIS — Silence, girl. (*to Cheops*) I implore you to listen to reason, sire. The families of the aristocracy are growing at a terrible rate. The country is simply swarming with intelligent children. In a few years, it will be impossible for a monarch to govern Egypt. We *must* have a war immediately, to kill some of them off. The aristocracy is losing its exclusiveness. The Prince of Setes alone has fifty children—and all legitimate. Three herds of camels cannot supply them with enough milk.

CHEOPS — Does he wish to leave his family for the battlefield?

AMNEPHIS — Yes, your Majesty. He even made a joke about it. He says that in War, he expects to find Peace.

CHEOPS — There must be something radically wrong when a man makes a joke like that! (*Enter two soldiers carrying a slab of granite bearing an inscription. They place it before Cheops.*)

CHAMBERLAIN — The ultimatum from the Prince of Setes.

CHEOPS — (*kicking it*) Excellent building material. I shall use it in the Pyramid.

SEMIROPIRIS — (*hopelessly*) The man thinks of nothing but his tombstone!

CHEOPS — (*to Semiropiris*) You shall be buried in it, my dear, I promise you!

AMNEPHIS — Your throne is tottering in the balance. Give it up, your Majesty, before it is too late.

CHEOPS — Give up building my tombstone? I can't give it up. I've been building it for twenty years.

AMNEPHIS — What of that, your Majesty? You could not only prevent this rebellion by a war, but amass a great treasure from the Babylonians into the bargain.

CHEOPS — Treasure? What do I care for treasure! Who was the richest man of the first dynasty? He's dead and forgotten. (*to Amnephis*) Don't look at me as though I was a madman. I'm sane, I tell you. I know what I'm doing. You want me to put everybody to work amassing gold and jewels and precious stones, for Semmy and the children to squander and dissipate when I'm dead and forgotten.

SEMIROPIRIS — The idea!

CHEOPS — I'm not interested in amassing treasure. I'm interested in my tombstone. I want immortality. Does that make me mad? Wouldn't I be far more mad to put everybody to work amassing treasures that I don't need, than a tombstone that I do need?

SEMIROPIRIS — (*contemptuously*) You need it badly. You're more dead than alive.

HENTSEN — Papa's quite right. There's something very delightful about immortality.

CHEOPS — You're a diplomat, Amnephis. Get them to postpone the rebellion until I've finished the Pyramid, then they can have as many wars as they please.

SEMIROPIRIS — Did you ever hear such talk!

NEK-KET — Your Majesty, I have an idea.

CHEOPS — Munt, make a note of that. The High Priest has an idea. (*to Nek-Ket*) Proceed, venerable father.

NEK-KET — The burden of supporting so many children weighs heavily on the aristocracy, sire. If this could be removed, they would lay down their arms,

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for they love pleasure better than war.

CHEOPS — Let us arrange for a general sacrifice of the children of the aristocracy. That should remove the entire difficulty.

HENTSEN — It might be quite a wonderful experience to be sacrificed!

NEK-KET — Your Majesty forgets that none but the common people have the right to be sacrificed.

CHEOPS — True. We must try to preserve the democratic spirit of the nation. What shall we do?

AMNEPHIS — Let us think. (*There is a pause. The wailing of the cat is heard.*)

NEK-KET — What was that?

CHEOPS — Well — have you thought of anything?

AMNEPHIS — It's no use, sire. It makes me nervous to think in public.

CHEOPS — (*cuttingly*) You must live in public. (*to Chamberlain*) Call the musicians. Music always makes my mind wander. It may light on something. (*Exit Chamberlain. The wailing of the cat is again heard.*)

NEK-KET — (*goes to box and opens it, and cat jumps out.*) The Sacred Cat!

HENTSEN — Poor old pussy!

NEK-KET — A sacrelege has been committed. The gods will be revenged on us!

CHEOPS — Don't bother us with religion now. Can't you see we have something serious to think about? (*Chamberlain re-enters, followed by the Ethiopian musicians.*)

AMNEPHIS — Play his Majesty some classical music. (*The musicians drone out a hideous incantation. Cheops sits, his brow resting on his hand.*) Amnephis stills the musicians.) Your Majesty? (*Cheops shakes his head.*)

SEMIROPIRIS — (*to musicians*) Play something a little more popular. (*The musicians play a lively, syncopated measure.*)

HENTSEN — (*placing fingers on her ears.*) How perfectly appalling!

AMNEPHIS — Has your great brain grappled with the situation, sire?

CHEOPS — I feel something coming.

NEK-KET — I will pray to the gods to impart their wisdom to your Majesty. (*He falls on his knees.*)

CHEOPS — (*angrily*) You'll do nothing of the sort. I'm perfectly capable of managing this without any assistance from the gods. And if I do it myself, I want all the credit for it.

NEK-KET — I beg your Majesty's pardon.

CHEOPS — (*to musicians*) Play softer! (*Above the music is heard the murmur of a crowd outside.*) What is that noise?

MUNT — It is Tethmoses, an extremely distinguished physician, from the Eastern banks of the Nile. Every day, at the hour of rest, he addresses an excessively great crowd of slaves and lesser building officials in front of the palace.

NEK-KET — It is some false priest preaching a new god. He shall be killed with appropriate ceremonies.

MUNT — I am more than certain he preaches no religion, sire.

CHEOPS — How do you know that?

MUNT — The people listen to him for hours at a time.

CHEOPS — (*to Chamberlain*) Bring in Tethmoses! (*Exit Chamberlain, followed by musicians.*) Who knows but that this man may be endowed with magical gifts. He may be able to help us.

AMNEPHIS — Your Majesty is surely not going to seek counsel of one who

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speaks in 'public places?

CHEOPS — Why not?

AMNEPHIS — Why—why—such people are so ungrammatical, sire. (*Enter Chamberlain, followed by Tethmoses, a soldier on guard at each side. Tethmoses is a handsome, fiery-looking individual, with tossing black hair and a defiant gesture.*)

CHEOPS — Of what do you speak to my people, Physician of the Nile?

TETHMOSES — I bid them defy you, Pharaoh!

HENTSEN — (*to Semiropiris*) Isn't he a perfect dear?

AMNEPHIS — You dare to speak thus to Pharaoh? Your tongue shall be torn from your head — immediately.

NEK-KET — Nay, the gods bid us to be merciful. Let him speak first, and we will tear his tongue out afterwards.

HENTSEN — Oh, Nek-Ket, you *are* unkind!

CHEOPS — Leave us, Hentsen, at once!

HENTSEN — But, Papa!

CHEOPS — (*angrily*) Go! (*Hentsen goes towards left door, but hides behind a curtain.*)

CHEOPS — Now, Physician, why do you tell my people to defy me?

TETHMOSES — (*oratorically*) Because you grind down the workers of Egypt, Pharaoh, fattening on their blood, robbing them of their just rights and a living wage, while you sit in purple on your throne.

CHEOPS — (*indignantly*) That isn't true. I'm not wearing purple.

TETHMOSES — Very well. Green, your Majesty. But the day is at hand—the day when you shall repent the injustices you have done the masses of Egypt.

CHEOPS — Is this man intoxicated?

AMNEPHIS — Only mentally, your Majesty.

CHEOPS — (*oratorically*) O people of Egypt, is this the thanks I receive? I—who have made such sacrifices, giving to the people my powers of enterprise, investing my treasures in this great project, the Pyramid, that the workers of Egypt might earn an honest living, instead of begging for their bread, and that sight-seers from the four corners of the earth might cross the desert in rich caravans, spending their money here among the people and bringing happiness and prosperity to this, our realm. Tethmoses, my man, I'm ashamed of you. What inducement will there be for other men to build tombstones, if the laboring classes mutter in discontent? If this sort of thing continues, Tethmoses, you will end in driving the tombstones out of Egypt!

AMNEPHIS — Many of these discontented people are not Egyptians at all, your Majesty. They are aliens—mere slaves, imported here by your contractors. Why, your Majesty, some of them can't even speak the Egyptian language!

CHEOPS — A most disgraceful state of affairs. They should be deported!

TETHMOSES — You cannot throw dust in our eyes, Pharaoh. We will rise against you, tyrant!

CHEOPS — They're going to rise. That makes another rebellion. Munt, make a special note of that for my biography. Two in a morning—it's becoming an epidemic.

TETHMOSES — Monster! Oppressor of the poor! Our blood is mixed with the mortar of your tombstone!

SEMIROPIRIS — It's that cursed tombstone again!

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TETHMOSES — Unless you give the laborers of your Pyramid a substantial increase in their wages and reduce their time of labor to twelve hours, from sunrise to sunset, a word shall be spread amongst those who live by the sweat of their brow, which will result in their complete extermination in one generation.

CHEOPS — You speak in riddles.

TETHMOSES — Understand me, Pharaoh! At any time it may please me, I can so instruct your workers that they will bear no more children into the bondage you impose upon them.

SEMIROPIRIS — Indeed?

CHEOPS — (*uncomfortable*) You boast foolishly, Tethmoses.

TETHMOSES — Your Majesty may not know that my youth has been spent in the study of alchemy. I have learned secrets that the gods themselves do not know!

CHEOPS — This is a calamity! How am I going to finish my tombstone before I die, without another generation of workers?

SEMIROPIRIS — If you don't stop building it, we shall all be killed before it's finished!

CHEOPS — He must be executed at once.

TETHMOSES — If I am not free before twenty four hours, I have arranged with others so that every man, woman and child in Egypt will know as much as I do.

NEK-KET — Young man, are you not ashamed of yourself?

TETHMOSES — Indeed I am not. I am inspired by the gods themselves to devote my life to social service.

HENTSEN — (*stepping forward from behind curtain*) I'm so glad you are interested in social service. Isn't it perfectly delightful?

TETHMOSES — It is my ideal, beautiful lady.

HENTSEN — I just adore idealism.

SEMIROPIRIS — Hentsen, how dare you speak to this young man, without even being introduced?

HENTSEN — (*to Tethmoses*) We know one another intuitively, don't we?

CHEOPS — (*angrily*) Go to your room at once!

HENTSEN — Don't be angry, Papa. (*to Tethmoses*) Something tells me we shall meet again! (*Exit Hentsen*).

SEMIROPIRIS — (*to Nek-Ket*) Do you think the child overheard?

NEK-KET — Let us pray not. There are some things a young girl should never know — until she finds out for herself. (*The noise of an approaching calvalcade of horses is heard. It comes to a stop in the courtyard without a trumpet blows; the voices of men dismounting are heard. Enter Chamberlain; he is greatly agitated.*)

CHAMBERLAIN — Your Majesty, the palace is completely surrounded by the soldiers of the Prince of Setes. He demands your *immediate* reply to his ultimatum.

CHEOPS — What a hurry he's in! Tell him he shall have my answer in half an hour. (*Exit Chamberlain.*)

AMNEPHIS — Does your Majesty wish to think again? If so, I will call the musicians.

SEMIROPIRIS — Cheops, this is no time for thinking. We must act. I'm rather interested in this young man. He reminds me of some one I used to know. Young man, would you mind waiting in that other room?

The GUARDIAN

AMNEPHIS — (*to Soldiers*) Take him out. (*Exit Soldiers and Tethmoses.*)

SEMIROPIRIS — Gentlemen, the palace is surrounded. I have a plan which will save Egypt!

AMNEPHIS — All the powers of diplomacy cannot save us now.

SEMIROPIRIS — Where diplomacy fails, old man, common sense succeeds. Tethmoses, the physician, must be won to our side. With his aid, the aristocracy need have families no larger than they can support. By arranging some nice little special sacrifices, with a lot of religious distinction, so as to make them society affairs, we can reduce the number of aristocratic children, and make home life bearable for all of them. That will stop their desire for war.

CHEOPS — (*chucking Semiropiris under chin*) My dear, you're a very clever woman!

AMNEPHIS — But what of the other rebellion?

CHEOPS — That's simple. We'll offer the workmen on the Pyramid a liberal increase in their wages.

AMNEPHIS — But where will your Majesty obtain the revenue for such an increase?

CHEOPS — Have you forgotten your history? We'll raise the cost of living—a little later.

NEK-KET — Your Majesty is even wiser than the gods.

CHEOPS — I have to be, now-a-days.

AMNEPHIS — But how shall we deal with Tethmoses?

SEMIROPIRIS — Bring him over to our side. Give him a position in a reform Government, and let him try to survive his own reforms.

CHEOPS — Excellent! Let us speak with Tethmoses. Munt, go inform the Prince of Setes that if he withdraws his soldiers, the information we obtain from Tethmoses will be in his hands within thirty minutes. (*Exit Munt. Enter Soldiers with Tethmoses*) Tethmoses, I have been much moved by your eloquence. I shall increase the wages of the workers immediately. Never have I heard such oratory as yours.

TETHMOSES — (*conceitedly*) Your Majesty, I'm not a bit surprised. Even though I do represent the working man, sire, I recognize that I am intellectually superior to the masses. The majority, of course, is always wrong. The bulk of the people being ignorant —

CHEOPS — (*interrupting*) Yes, yes. Meanwhile we must find you a position. What do you say to the Governorship of the Marshes?

TETHMOSES — (*without enthusiasm*) Thank you, sire.

SEMIROPIRIS — Before you go — to the Marshes — I should like some professional advice, Physician of the Nile!

TETHMOSES — The Governor of the Marshes dies soon of malaria, sire.

CHEOPS — Would you be Regent of the Two Niles and Governor of Ethiopia?

TETHMOSES — I would rather be nearer Your Majesty's person, sire. Besides, while I believe all men are born equal, I strongly object to associating with Ethiopians.

CHEOPS — (*aside to Amnephis*) Does the fellow expect me to offer him my very throne?

AMNEPHIS — The greater the reformer, your Majesty, the greater the price. (*Enter Princess Hentsen, gloriously gowned, and carrying a roll of papyrus.*)

HENTSEN — Oh, Papa, may I speak with the young physician? (*She looks alluringly at Tethmoses.*)

CHEOPS — We are discussing important matters. Run along!

The GUARDIAN

HENTSEN — (*pleadingly*) I want to read him a poem I've just written. Mayn't I?

CHEOPS — Very well, (*aside to Tethmoses*) This sort of thing often happens in Royal families. Pay no attention to it. (*Hentsen and Tethmoses withdraw towards back wall. Cheops, Semiopiris, Amnephis and Nek-Ket come front.*)

SEMIOPIRIS — (*in a whisper*) We will leave them here together. He will never escape her.

CHEOPS — You are right. She's looking at him the same way you looked at me when I first met you!

AMNEPHIS — Will this scoundrel wed the Princess?

SEMIOPIRIS — Have no fear. He will. His knowledge is already ours. Let us go and prepare.

AMNEPHIS — Prepare? For what?

SEMIOPIRIS — For the wedding. (*Exit Cheops, Semiopiris, Amnephis and Nek-Ket.*)

TETHMOSES — (*coming front*) The poem has indeed a subtle spiritual quality.

HENTSEN — It's perfectly sweet of you to like it.

TETHMOSES — These last lines are really wonderful. They have a vibrant rhythm. (*Quotes*)

"Alas, I dare not think of what I feel,
For thou, sweet youth, art all I hold ideal."

That's what I call poetry.

HENTSEN — Do you know who inspired it?

TETHMOSES — I cannot guess — unless it be one of the new gods recently introduced from Syria.

HENTSEN — This was written to no god—but a man—an idealist. A perfectly darling person.

TETHMOSES — An idealist? Can it be that there are two in Egypt?

HENTSEN — That depends on what you mean by an idealist.

TETHMOSES — Why—an idealist is a man who believes in making a Heaven on Earth, even if he has to raise Hell itself to do it.

HENTSEN — My poem was written to such a man.

TETHMOSES — (*a light dawning on him*) Can it be that this wonderful sonnet was written to me?

HENTSEN — (*modestly*) I must not say. You forget I am a maiden.

TETHMOSES — How can I forget it, beautiful Princess? Good as it is, only a maiden would write that kind of poetry. How you will improve when you are married!

HENTSEN — I should just perfectly adore to improve.

TETHMOSES — Every great lyric poetess has been married at least once—or twice.

HENTSEN — But nature never intended a girl of my intelligence and spirit to have children. That's why I object to marriage.

TETHMOSES — A woman of your distinction is wasted as a mother. Were you married, you would give birth to an epic.

HENTSEN — Wouldn't that be delightful? I am so interested in Reform—and reformers.

TETHMOSES — We seem to have much that makes us kindred, Princess.

HENTSEN — We have, haven't we? Do you believe in love at first sight?

The GUARDIAN

- TETHMOSES — Not only do I believe in it—I practice it!
- HENTSEN — Take me. I am yours. (*She precipitates herself upon Tethmoses. They kiss.*) (*purrring*) I suppose you don't believe in marriage.
- TETHMOSES — Oh, yes I do, dear.
- HENTSEN — Why do you?
- TETHMOSES — Marriage, my dear, like Charity, covers a multitude of sins. All really modern people believe in it.
- HENTSEN — Then we must marry at once. I just love to be modern. (*They kiss again. Enter Cheops, followed by Nek-Ket, Munt and Semiropiris.*)
- CHEOPS — Congratulations, my children, my dearest wishes are fulfilled.
- HENTSEN — (*disappointed*) Aren't you going to be angry, Papa?
- CHEOPS — We are all delighted. Tethmoses, we have decided to establish a reform government. Amnephis has just been executed. I appoint you Vizier of all Egypt in his place.
- HENTSEN — Then we're not going to have a Romance?
- CHEOPS — No, dear, not this moment. (*to Tethmoses*) The Queen Mother-in-law wishes to congratulate you! (*Tethmoses kisses her hand.*)
- SEMIROPIRIS — I can't say how delighted I am to have such a clever young man in the family. You'll be a welcome addition.
- CHEOPS — (*aside to Semiropiris*) We'll discharge the Court Physician at once, and save his salary. (*to Munt*) Munt give the new Vizier my proclamation granting the workers their increase. (*Munt hands Tethmoses a scroll of papyrus.*)
- TETHMOSES — (*examining it*) Thank you, sire. The people will be delighted.
- CHEOPS — (*taking Tethmoses aside*) I suppose you'll have no objection to letting me have that data you spoke of?
- TETHMOSES — Not at all, sire. (*Produces scroll concealed in his robe, which he hands to Cheops.*) Here is a copy. (*Cheops takes scroll, devours it eagerly. Semiropiris snatches it from him, and scans it eagerly; Hentsen snatches it from the Queen; Nek-Ket horrified takes it from Hentsen, reading it himself; Munt takes it from Nek-Ket.*)
- CHEOPS — (*aside to Munt*) Take that immediately to the Prince of Setes. Oh, by the way, tell him it shall be unlawful to spread the information amongst the workers.
- MUNT — Any penalty, sire?
- CHEOPS — Yes. Imprisonment for ten years! (*Exit Munt, reading the scroll, followed by Nek-Ket who reads it over Munt's shoulder.*)
- TETHMOSES — Before assuming my office, sire, I shall bear your proclamation to the workers. And now by your leave, I will withdraw with the Princess.
- CHEOPS — Adieu, Tethmoses. (*Exit Tethmoses and Hentsen, their arms interwoven. The sound of horsemen galloping away from the courtyard is heard.*) (*looking over parapet*) The Prince of Setes' cavalry has retired. What luck! Two revolutions avoided—and no interruption in the work on my tombstones. How easy it is to fool the people.
- SEMIROPIRIS — Our greatest luck was to find a husband for Hentsen.
- CHEOPS — Yes—perhaps so.
- SEMIROPIRIS — But we've yet to find husbands for her nine sisters. (*sighs*). If we'd only met that young man earlier!

CURTAIN

S E R E N A D E

BY THOMAS KENNEDY

Beneath the broad, high windows of the world,
He stood some time before the dawn, and made
His song to Life; half fearfully he played
For that dear stranger, and his fingers curled
Caressingly about the silver strings
Of a small lute, which he had fashioned from
His dreams with tender cunning: it was pearled
With lucent thoughts of love, and was inlaid
With curious hopes, and carved with shining wings
Of aspiration, and a wreath of palm.

Though deep her slumber was, Life heard his song
Of wild, thin ecstasy, and waking, came
To the high casement, where she heard her name
Invoked with necromancy. For one long
And horrying moment, full into his eyes
She turned her gaze; with anguish each was swept
By that swift revelation. Then along
Her couch, Life threw herself, and tried to frame
Prayer through numb lips, but fell asleep with sighs,
While he stood crushing his frail lute and wept.

THE YOUNG EMPRESS IS BORED

BY PAUL ELDRIDGE

The peacock strutted solemnly
In the great Imperial Garden,
And his shadow passed slowly
Over the wide fountain whose water
Was a perfect counterpart of Heaven.
The young Empress sitting at the open window
Sighed and thought:
"Whatever the magnificence of the colors,
The shadow must always be black."

PLAINS MOON

BY HAL BORLAND

The half-grown moon
Sits, a yellow coyote,
On the flats
At the edge of town;
He blinks greedily, sulkily,
At the street-lights sputtering there.

I steal out toward him
For one close look at his fiery coat.
But he slinks away.
Always just beyond me,
On the next hillock.

I run!
I hurl myself on him, he fallen!
I will grasp him by his long, drooping tail!
But he has found a hole just over the hill,
And he crawls in,
Slowly,
Grinning at me,
Taunting me from his safety.

Once I holed him thus
And sat watching,
Waiting for his inquisitive nose to poke out.
And I waited all night,
And all day.
Then he crept from another hole
And laughed at my foolishness —
From behind my back.



"STILL LIFE"

MARSDEN HARTLEY

MIKE COBB

BY EVA GOLDBECK

The shadows lengthened from the trees at the edge of the lawn. There was a pink light in the western low sky and a little wavering spot on the hedge was pink. In the kitchen his mother was washing the dishes and talking to her husband at his supper.

Mike had gulped his food without chewing it and without a word had gone out noiselessly to sit on the kitchen steps. He did not go to the village to meet the boys who should have been his friends. He had no friends; he rarely went out.

Only a mile away was the Ocean. But there was no sound of it tonight. Everything was very still, and harmless, and pink. Even his mother's voice sounded soft as she spoke to her new husband.

Before his mother had married again and they had come north, he had had a friend. Though perhaps she had never meant to be his friend, he thought now. He had seen her laughing and being happy with other boys and girls, he remembered. He could never be happy except when he was alone and had forgotten himself in a listening kind of dream, or when he was near her. An aching kind of happiness that was. When he saw her as she walked down the street the slimnesses and curves of her figure seemed to mold his heart and body and the palms of his hand to hold her. He looked at his hands. They were too big; they could not be molded into hollows, little ones, and into caressing tenderness.

She had gone to school. He was too poor. But sometimes he waited for her and carried her books or her packages. He never spoke to her. The words came to his lips, he heard them inside himself, but they sounded like tears, and so he choked and the crying made his eyes limpid. He felt like a dog. He wanted to be a dog.

His adoration stirred her in her laughing youngness. It made strange delicious thrills wave through her just-developing body. She looked at him and his look fired her blood. It troubled her vaguely, but it was sweet.

The day before he was to go north he could not leave her. He stood by the gate for minutes after she had closed it behind her. His hand holding her books lay on the gate; he would not give her the books.

She looked and looked. She did not laugh at him. She thrilled and curved inwardly with fire, and then she felt little swoons of a new tenderness, her eyes became misty, she bent forward, towards him, slightly; her lips parted. He looked at her

without a change of expression. He stooped and kissed her lips, quietly, and with love.

Remembering, now, he stirred. He was going to find her again.

She had a little white blood in her. There was something creamy about her. But he, too, perhaps had white blood. He was called Mike Cobb because his mother thought he might be the son of an Irishman she had known, and she did not want to do the Irishman an injustice. Her husband considered it fine to have a son who was an Irishman.

But white people liked Rosalie and they shunned him. Negroes shunned him too. He was too quiet; they thought him half-witted or stuck-up.

This last year he had dreamed of white girls. He had seen Rosalie with a white man. There had been a festival; she had danced on the stage, all alone. She was so graceful; Mike's teeth chattered watching her. A young white man leaned in the doorway. Her dance was finished. He crossed the floor and jumped on the stage. The orchestra played the same music. The young white man danced, and Rosalie followed him. She never hesitated. They danced together. It was a love dance now.

Mike had walked all night. He passed white girls. He looked at them. He had never noticed them before. They were slender, they stepped prettily. If that white blood could take her, he could—why not....

But he knew what that meant. It could not even be thought of. Only in dreams, now, it returned.

He made a love in himself for Rosalie. She was everything. He did not look at white girls. Why should he? She was lovelier than they. He passed them; he grew more silent. He thought, but he never talked his thoughts. He became dull.

She had been only fourteen: would he find her again? And he had been seventeen. Then his mother had married again and they had come north, to the estate on Long Island, a mile from the Ocean.

Unwittingly he got to his feet and went out the gate, down the street. There was no breeze, but the salt flavor, always present, penetrated the thin after-sunset air.

It was time for the first movie show and the summer patrons were coming to the village. Cars lined the curb.

Mike walked with his head ducked, as if it were wrong for him to be there. But it did not occur to him to turn into another street. His eyes roved over the perpetually receding semicircle of ground about his feet. Other feet passed through it. Men's broad flat boots went by unnoticed. But a woman's foot passing arrested the constant shifting of his eyes.

For an instant the vacancy of his look was filled, became concrete. A woman's foot passing was a flashlight picture in his mind.

After that night of Rosalie's dance he had learned not to look up. He saw only ankles and feet passing. He did not think of them as belonging to people; the ones that pleased him were an impersonal delight as the upward lines of a young tree are. He liked best the black ankles that seemed to cut at both sides; they thrilled him, were important. Rosalie's ankles — black, sharp, flashing. Brown ankles soothed him and white ones were a momentary mist in his eyes. He never remembered colors or shapes; as there was no after-taste of satisfaction he did not hunt them; each one fulfilled a look and that was all.

He went along drowsed by the continuous passing of feet. Rosalie, Rosalie . . .

He would never find her again. Suddenly he knew — it was over.

He felt unbearably tired, tired to death. He had always been afraid of death but now it didn't matter.

A horse was made to walk about and about in a circle, drawing a heavy load. It didn't have the resistance to, it couldn't, stand still. It had to go on and on; until in the end something gave out and in a moment, without a sound, it died.

That was the way he felt. He had lived on and on, dragging the hopelessness of it, not knowing how to rid himself of the load. And now, suddenly, quietly, something in him had given way under it and he was broken.

Everything else went on . . . feet, other feet . . . on and on, passing him. He was left alone, without any movement of life in him.

He might one day go back — he might one day see her again — even here, now, on this street — he had thought of that, half expected her, at every corner all these years . . . but it was no use. He knew now. It wouldn't be the same. She had been only fourteen. She wouldn't be his Rosalie any more. His Rosalie — his Rosalie was —

His Rosalie no longer existed, except as he remembered her in his love. He could never find her again.

He was walking along a road, beyond the village. His eyes had stopped hunting. They were completely dulled. He knew there was nothing they could see outside there; the only life left anywhere was a girl's figure, a grace of curves, faintly outlined in the mist of his mind.

He went with his head down; the road retreated unnoticed beneath his feet. On each side were substanceless black walls. Sometimes a branch reached out and pricked him.

The night wind came up, blowing salt from the Ocean. Mike had never seen the Ocean. He had been afraid of its roar. He liked gentle things, soft, soothing things that lapped over his mind.

But tonight he had forgotten fear. He only walked, walked, his steps covering his mind with sleep.

The wind blew sharply across him. He looked up surprised. The solid dark of the road ahead had vanished. Before him was a lighter, vaguely large arc. Nearby it held a black, small space shaped like a half-moon, moving backward and forward with a sing-song motion.

He liked it. He walked forward cautiously; soft ground pulled at his feet and frightened him, but he went on till he was surrounded by a tslap-tslap, soft, overlapping, rhythmical — backward and forward, sing-song. It went tslap-tslap in him too, so pleasantly, so soothingly, and the girl's figure in his mind wavered with it, its curves were misty thrills.

Lapping, lapping . . . he listened, and knew it was water. He thought of the Ocean, but this was much too small. He was afraid of the Ocean, and this seemed a friendly thing. It motioned as if calling him, running out a little way somewhere as if to show him something, and coming back for him.

Tslap, tslap . . . soft, her lips . . . love, love for Rosalie in him.

Tslap, tslap it touched his ankles and vanished . . . When would he find her again? He was looking . . . Tslap-tslap, it tinkled against his ankles . . . He laughed — it had come back, promising . . .

He bent his head and followed it.

SPINOZA AND BERGSON

(a parallel)

BY WILLIAM NATHANSON

Translated from the Yiddish by David Wollins

IV.

Aesthetics always places the emphasis upon creating rather than on being or becoming.

Spinoza comprehended the world within an infinitely extended eternity. He let everything in the world evolve from the eternal decree of God as necessarily as it followed from the nature of a triangle that all three angles equalled two right angles.

The future as well as the present, and the present as well as the past are all included in a single time extension, which has no beginning and no end, and which we call eternity. Everything that happens, everything that passes before our eyes, is no more than a transitory view, a shortsighted orientation of the eternal and infinite being. In its essence reality will always be what it was and always was what it now is; and to an eye which could comprehend the absolute, the past, present and future would *all* fuse into transparent, crystal-clear *being*. Where there is no becoming there is, of course, no improvement or change. And so Spinoza declared that for him reality and perfection were one and the same thing.

Bergson does not like the infinite-extension eternity of Spinoza. Instead of a universal eternity he perceives with his intuition a universal duration, and instead of substantial being he sees an infinite creative process in the universal essence.

Not only with being, but even with becoming is Bergson dissatisfied. He goes so far as to revolutionize the epoch-making concept of evolution. According to Bergson the world is not merely evolving. Events in the world are from his viewpoint not merely the results of forces that have from time immemorial been lying hidden from us in the most secret corners of the world substance. None of the heretofore proposed factors, nor all the factors together can, in his opinion, explain all the changes, all the complications and all the progressive turns that constitute what is called evolution.

Going through the entire biological science he finds enough material, he thinks, to confirm his hypothesis, at which he arrived by intuition and deduction. And this hypothesis is that the universe is undergoing a creative evolution.

Thus actual things are brought about not only from potential forces, but new forces are being infinitely created in the world. This is the meaning of the phrase: "The world endures." And the meaning of spirit is creation which is also the meaning of life. Life and creation are almost identical with each other. They all are God's or the world reality's concentrated moments of tension. Matter is nothing else but the moments of relaxation of the divine substance or divine personality.

"The universe," says Bergson, "is not made but is being made continually. It is growing, perhaps indefinitely by the addition of new worlds." And God according to Bergson is everlasting life, activity and freedom.

God, as well as the universe and everything within the universe, endures, and to endure means to create anew as opposed to eternal being.

"Real duration," says Bergson, "is that in which each form flows out of previous forms, while adding to them something new, and is explained by them as much as it explains them; but to deduce this form directly from one complete being which it is supposed to manifest, is to return to Spinozism. It is, like Leibnitz and Spinoza, to deny to duration all efficient action." On this point of efficient action as the par excellence of reality or real divinity, Bergson strongly disagrees not only with Leibnitz and Spinoza but also with that giant of the new philosophy—Kant—and with the greatest philosophers after Kant.

Kant established the entire material world, which is rooted in space, together with space, within the human mind, and thus made nature and natural law spring from the human spirit. With all this Bergson agrees fully but senses further that there is another time besides the abstract time, which is just as bare and empty and transparent as space itself and does not possess a single drop more effective activity than Spinoza's eternity. Kant did not sense this other, concrete time, which unlike abstract time does not run parallel to space but lies in regions entirely different from space. In other words Kant did not sense duration which is the intensive, creative motion, and not, like space, an extensive relaxation. And thus Kant had to erect a wall infinitely long in height and depth to separate the spatialised human knowledge from reality, which is on the other side of space.

"According to Kant," says Bergson, "these facts are spread out on one plane as fast as they arise; they are external to each other and external to the mind. Of a knowledge from within, that could grasp them in their springing forth instead of taking them already sprung, that would dig beneath space and spatialized time, there is never any question. Yet it is indeed beneath this plane that our consciousness places us; there flows true duration."

Both duration and space, or spatialized time, and both abstract

and concrete time are organic fractions of reality just as intuition and intellect are elements or efforts of the same human spirit. Duration and space are two opposed motions of the universal spirit or two opposite conditions, both of which urge the world's evolutionary process, which is full of creation. If we depend solely on the intellect we see only one condition of the world march and our knowledge must be, as Kant thought, relative. If, however, we become aware of intuition, which is working within us, we become cognizant either of eternal being, which has only one state, or else of the unceasing duration with its many opposed states or conditions. In any event we sense the essence of the world and our knowledge becomes, as Spinoza thought, absolute.

This concept of matter and spirit, space and duration, intellect and intuition, as of two opposed motions, or states, or moods of the universal and human spirit accomplishes two things.

On the one hand this concept strengthens monism because it makes more conceivable, as has been shown before, the reduction of matter to spirit and the transformation or fusion of both in a single stream—a stream which flows from the single source of the universally creating and unceasingly enduring and all-including personality of God.

On the other hand this concept strengthens the opposedness of the qualities and functions of matter and spirit. It thus becomes possible for Bergson to oppose himself against the ironclad uniformity and law of Spinoza and others, and to free mathematics from the universal applicability with which Spinoza and others bound it as with chains. Spinoza once concentrated his efforts toward setting within the bounds of mathematics and universal law all the human feelings, passions and emotions as well as the various appearances and happenings of animate and inanimate nature.

"Nature," says Spinoza, "is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action; that is, nature's laws and ordinances, whereby all things come to pass and change from one form to another, are everywhere and always the same; so that there should be one and the same method of understanding the nature of all things whatsoever, namely, through nature's universal laws and rules. Thus the passions of hatred, anger, envy, and so on, considered in themselves, follow from this same necessity and efficacy of nature. . . . I shall, therefore, treat of the nature and strength of the emotions according to the same method, as I employed heretofore in my investigations concerning God and the mind. I shall consider human actions and desires in exactly the same manner, as though I were concerned with lines, planes, and solids."

Bergson loosens the chains of mathematics and natural law from spirit and life.

Spirit and life are creative forces; they are unceasing streams

of life; they endure; and everything which they create is free. The world is not caught in the net of eternity but on the contrary has before it an absolutely free and undetermined future. The entire past in its absoluteness enters into every future moment, swallows it and transforms it through the present into a past once more. But all this occurs after and not before or during the moment of creation. The entire past takes part in the creative process and effects and influences it by its more or less intensive concentration. The past cannot, however, determine, much less predetermine. Everything which is created becomes immediately inclosed within the limits of law which logic or intellect always has ready. But with the entrance of the creation into the realms of intellectual law it becomes materiality instead of spirit and lifelessness instead of life. Life and spirit in their deepest essences exceed both materiality and intellectuality as well as every mathematical and every physical law and every scientific causality.

"Analysis," says Bergson, "will undoubtedly reduce the processes of organic creation to a continually increasing number of physio-chemical phenomena, and the physicists and chemists will naturally not occupy themselves with anything but those processes; but it does not follow from this that chemistry and physics will ever give us the key to life.

"All our analyses show us in life an effort to ascend the slope from which matter rolls down. In this is revealed the possibility or the necessity, even, of a process which is the opposite of materiality, a process which is capable only through its interruption of creating matter."

In so far as life is the opposite of materiality and in so far as it constantly seeks to free itself from materiality, it is full of innumerable creative possibilities; and what is in the process of being created cannot be explained in terms of what has not yet been created and hence cannot be predicted or pre-determined.

The content of what is as yet not, is known to none, not even to God. All that we may be sure of is that every creation means a greater concentration of the universal presence; a greater triumph of concentration over relaxation; a greater triumph of spirit over matter; deeper contents for the universal Godliness; and, finally, constantly deeper ends and purposes, meanings and values for the universal substance or personality which goes under the name of God.

V.

Duration thus ipse facto includes indeterminism which, in our opinion, is Bergson's greatest accomplishment. No one has taken such a firm stand against every kind of mechanism, whether in its spiritual aspect as Spinoza presented it or in the materialistic aspect in which science has been seeking to clothe it.

Bergson's plea is that mechanistic explanations are applicable to systems which our mind has artificially severed from the whole. We cannot under any circumstances, however, admit that the whole itself and the systems which are within the whole and follow in the footsteps of the whole are mechanistically explainable, for then time would be useless and even unreal.

And what is the essence of mechanism, asks Bergson, if not that it considers the future and the past as calculable functions of the present? All this means merely to accept with Spinoza that everything in the world is already given. But thinking meaterialistically, and not spiritually, as did Spinoza, such scientists as Laplace and Huxley came to the conclusion that if human intelligence could peer into the essence of the structure of matter and into all the operations of cosmic energy, it could predict in all details the future events of the world. All the future would be an open book for man. That would mean that time hasn't the least effectiveness, that time does nothing, is nothing.

Duration means, however, that concrete time affects and creates and fills itself continually with new contents, which had never before, lain potentially anywhere, and which therefore are unpredictable.

Bergson considers every moment of our personality to be an original moment of a history which is no less original. Thus he transposes the duration of the individual into the duration of the universe as a whole. All reality and the universal personality itself thus develop entirely independent of any kind of preordained future.

Here Bergson has given an entirely new trend to all the discussions of the problem of free will. For the first time he has made it clear that the freedom of an individual does not consist in the choice between two possible courses of action. From the standpoint of duration such a thing is impossible for everything which confronts duration and the creative spirit and everything which faces the impetuously moving stream of life are futures independent of any predeterminations. Man is free only to will, that is to say, to drive his creative forces, his durational intensity and his creative concentration to the highest and deepest degree. He can spur and help his will to freedom on to the highest ecstasy and thus help the triumph of spirit over matter, and this already means to help create newer and deeper contents and aspects for the world, which, each one of them and all of them together, signify a concentration upon the universal self.

Man thus becomes a real partner in the business of creation. His every concentration in the direction of spirit over matter achieves a deeper sense and greater worth. And the effort which really achieves is only that one which embodies the full personality of the individual, his entire and complete self. Hence Bergson speaks expressly of two selves in one and the same person. One self

is, as he expresses it, the inner projection of the other self — its spatial image. The profounder non-spatial self can be reached only through a deep introspection which leads us to sense our inner states as living things which are continually becoming.

"We perceive this self whenever, by a strenuous effort of reflection, we turn our eyes from the shadow which follows us and retire into ourselves. Though we generally live and act outside our own person, in space rather than in duration, and though by this means we give a handle to the law of causality, which binds the same effects to the same causes, we can nevertheless always get back into pure duration, of which the moments are internal and heterogeneous to one another, and in which a cause cannot repeat its effect since it will never repeat itself."

We return to duration only when emotion, will and reason fuse into something which is neither will nor emotion nor reason, but a combination deeper and stronger than any one of these expressions, a combination which can be indicated, I believe with the phrase intensive creation.

This moment of intensive creation knows no laws and no plans whether they be of dry logic or of the limiting intellect. This is the moment when new worlds are created, when the great things and the things of genius are being accomplished. This is the moment when the cosmically chaotic and mentally irrational are created in such a degree and with such fullness that there is enough of it for nature to subject to law and for logic to rationalize and for something of it to be left over which cannot be naturalized or rationalized, and which can only from time to time be comprehended in a lesser measure by those who possess a lesser intuition and in a greater measure by those who possess a greater intuition.

Irrationalism thus becomes another characteristic which together with duration and indeterminism characterize the philosophy of Bergson. Bergson and Spinoza together have thus given humanity a picture of a universe which is absolutely and realistically spiritual and which is immanently monistic. In addition it is a universe either determined or free, either rational and regulated by natural law or irrational and without law. In a larger work on Spinoza and Bergson I will try to indicate the abundance of duration which Spinoza's eternity possesses, and the plentiful freedom which is revealed in Spinoza's determinism, and even the great place that remains in Spinoza's system for irrationalism.

THE END.



"VOILA LES FOURES!"

ANNE MERRIMAN PECK



OLD HOUSE—CAPE COD

ANNE MERRIMAN PECK

TWO POEMS

BY GWENDOLEN HASTE

MEDICUS

Black pits,
Rushing whirlpools,
Mouthing ape faces that grin and disappear,
Then your hand
And voice,
And the sliding swift planes of life swing into patterns
of purity,
The ape faces grimace and vanish.
And I know pain is but a flame that passes,
And fear a black horror to be met with laughter.

So might one long ago
Kneeling in a band of sunlight
In the forest
Have felt the creeping nameless terror of swamp
and night and storm
Melt and swirl away
In the strong beat of radiance
From the throne of the Sun God.

OCTOBER

Autumn comes early
In the dry lands,
Grudgingly yielding a crop
Into the hands
Of men bitter with drouth.
The frosts come soon.
The last fireweed withers.
The asters die.
The leaves drop.
And if as the sun whirls south
It shines warm
In the hours after noon,
It is only the smile
Of darkness and treachery
Hinting of storm.

DREAM SYMBOLISM AND THE DESIRE MOTIVE IN THE FLORAL DESIGNS OF THE NORTHEASTERN INDIANS

BY FRANK G. SPECK

Hamlin, in discussing floral designs in art, made the following declaration: "It was the French lay-builders . . . who first boldly discarded the worn-out traditions of classic art in their carving, and found in the humblest plants at their feet, in field and forest, a new inspiration for decorative designs. They introduced a new era in the history of ornament motives; they were pioneers in that new world of nature forms in ornament."

"Floral and foliage forms would seem at first sight to be among the most obvious resources of the decorator. Their intrinsic beauty, both of outline and color, the regular and often geometric dispositions of their parts, and their extraordinary abundance in nature, have brought them into general use in modern decorative design. We are accustomed to see them used in conventional color-patterns or in naturalistic designs in carpets and rugs, on wall-papers and tiles, in all sorts of ceramic decoration, in calico-prints and brocades, in garlands, festoons, rosettes and surface-patterns carved in stone and wood on all sorts of structures. The decorative sculptors of the Middle Ages in Europe drew many of their happiest inspirations from natural leaves and flowers, and the beautiful tiles and plates and vases of the Persian ceramists of the same period are brilliantly adorned with semi-naturalistic representations of the carnation-pink, rose, tulip, dahlia and other flowers. It seems only natural to suppose that primitive decorators must have early discovered the decorative beauty and fitness of flower and leaf forms, and made use of them almost at the beginning of their artistic development.

"This, however, is not the case. Floral forms are very rare in savage and primitive art, and absolutely lacking in the majority of its phases The conscious effort to imitate nature for the sake of the beauty of its forms is a late phase of artistic growth." A. D. F. Hamlin, "The Evolution of Decorative Motives," *American Architect*, vol. 60, p. 43.

One of the many perplexing problems in North American art is that of the floral designs in beadwork and silk work predominating in the decorative embroidery of the tribes of the northeast. It has been assumed without much question that they are primarily of European derivation. And yet, in view of the individuality of the

floral patterns in composition with the incurved lines in the art of the Wabanaki peoples south of the St. Lawrence, the closely related painted figures of the Naskapi and the etchings of birch bark of the Montagnais sub-tribes, an antiquity is indicated for the whole design registry which would seem to antedate the separation of these Algonkian populations. Since the aboriginal content of the Naskapi patterns has not been, and hardly can be, questioned we are left to infer that a native background exists for the plant, flower and tree curved designs of the entire north and northeast. In a previous report (*The Double-Curve Motive in Northeastern Algonkian Art*, Geological Survey of Canada, 1915) I attempted to trace the distribution of this peculiar motivation. At that time, I had only a partial idea of a pervading native symbolism. Such appeared chiefly in connection with the patterns as they were represented by the Penobscot Indians of Maine. In this case the conventional representation was that of political subdivisions; chieftainship, the council body and similar concepts—in itself a unique phenomenon for North America so far as is known. For the corresponding region north of the St. Lawrence a tree and floral significance had also been known for some time. But its wide application to dream life was then not comprehended. Now through increased intimacy with the inner life of the nomads of the Labrador peninsula a series of viewpoints resulting from study in the field have gradually crystallized into a scheme of pictorial symbolism which not only establishes beyond further doubt the native origin of the patterns but their functional application to dream life and spiritual control in a manner that is new to the science of native American art in a number of its details. This must alter our subsequent attitude toward floral representation in America.

Among the numerous tribes between Hudson Bay and the Atlantic, the so-called Naskapi and Montagnais of the great peninsula, the hunter relies upon the revelations and guidance of the soul-spirit for his success in securing game. This is the whole basis of material existence, for these Indians are solely hunters, trappers and fishermen. Yet they *dream* for a living as literally as they hunt and trap. This assertion rests on the theory in native philosophy that the individual possesses a soul which works for him in overcoming the spirits that protect the animals. Without spiritual aid the hunter is powerless to overcome the animals. The individual soul spirit requires certain things of its human possessor which it reveals in dreams. Hence the dream control. In respect to art, which is the object in view at present, it works out that the soul-spirit requires that objects, figures, creatures, colors and many other things revealed to the individual in dreams be represented graphically and symbolically in order that their power, which we may call magic, may be employed in securing success for the individual's undertakings. If the dream commands or visions are ignored the

soul spirit is thought to be offended and fails to respond in turn. So the impulse to make symbolic art objects in beadwork, silk-work, painting, skin and cloth appliquee is associated with spiritualism. Individualism in symbolic art is accordingly most emphatic, there being little occasion for motifs to become standardized beyond what limitations are of course determined by local technique and traditional art stock — that is what the individual artist-dreamer has already seen among the decorated properties of his or her tribe.

Among the Montagnais at Lake St. John the techniques of silk- and beadwork on cloth and skin, of ribbon, cloth, skin and fur appliquee, and birch-bark etching, show a wide variation around a few characteristic design properties representing tree, plant, animal, human and celestial phenomena. Specimens in the Museum are now abundant enough, as the result of a number of years of collecting and questioning the makers of the objects in the actual field, to make an interpretative summary more than a mere tentation. For example, we may look at a game-bag made by a woman for a little boy just learning to accompany his father on his trapping line. The sack, about a foot square, is made of white canvas, edged with blue goods. The white represents the face of the north country in winter beneath its covering of snow. On the edge of the flap, which serves as a cover, is a red border. This represents the red winter sunset. On the corner edges of the sack are red ribbons which symbolize the beaver, the northern Indian's meat staple. The flap also bears a realistic figure, embroidered in silk, of a caribou and a rabbit. On the flap is also the outline of a partridge on a crude representation of a tree consisting of only a few lines. These are all animals which the woman desires her little boy to kill soon, and of which she dreamed. Her dream resulted in the construction of the sack and its decorations. She thinks that if she fails to comply with the suggestion of the dream her soul will feel that its dream visitations are ignored and will, in consequence, lessen its interest in her boy's behalf. Such an outcome would be a disadvantage to the boy's future success as a hunter. How minutely the simplest devices in cloth and skin, in ribbon, silk and beadwork carry a significance in the exercise of magic power can only be understood when we master the thought that in every creation of nature, both natural and artificial, there inheres a vague power. This is indicated by the term *mantu* in Montagnais. Employment can be made of the latent powers in such objects for the accomplishment of one's needs and desires in life, in proportion to the power which one's soul can exert over them. And the soul spirit can be strengthened by cultivation; that is, by nourishing it through administering to its needs made known to the individual in dreams.

The pictorial or symbolic representation of the plant or animal whose aid is to be secured, is equivalent to the creature or object

itself. Hence we may say, to put it roughly, that there is an analogy in far northern Algonkian philosophy between symbol or picture and control power in bringing the objects portrayed under the dominance of the individual human spirit for the accomplishment of human needs. All work toward this end is done under the suggestion of dreams bestowed by this same spirit residing in the individual. And this spirit is strengthened by affording it the satisfaction of seeing its promptings obeyed whether it be in the active pursuit of game or in the field of art-work and ornament making. No material, nor ornament, nor design is too insignificant to be recognized in the exploitation of spiritual forces. It would, of course, be folly not to realize that there has been degeneration from the spiritual level in art and ornamentation in many individual cases. For development toward decoration and ornament making lacking in dream or magic associations cannot be denied, especially when the purely aesthetic impulses have to be considered as operating in the evolution of a symbolic art. Thus we may conceive of specimens of embroidery and cloth work coming from these tribes in which there may have been no deeper motive than the desire to manufacture something pretty and satisfactory to the eye and to the purse. But this is not true of the majority of specimens of decorative art processes of the Montagnais and Naskapi which are made for themselves to be used in their strenuous life in the bush. Most of the actual products of the decorative industry used among the conservatives of these tribes can be explained and interpreted by their makers if they choose to do so. To deny a religious symbolism to northern Indian floral art would be an injustice; one might as well deny the same to communion bread by maintaining that it is often manufactured by the local baker.

The manufacture of ornamental objects, some useful in nature others not particularly so, has accordingly become somewhat habitual. It seems that many of the Indian women here are simply fond of making bright cloth and skin articles during their spare moments,—from sheer love of the thing. They seem to find in it gratification of some sort, after the manner of industriously inclined civilized women of the leisure class who persistently knit sweaters or embroider handkerchiefs and table linen, or the Eskimo who indulge in the carving of ivory figures of men, animals and sleds. The range of materials and objects is indeed wide. Large skin or cloth bags, small pouches, cloth, leather and fur needle-cases, tobacco pouches, watch bags, moccasin-tops, mittens, shot pouches and cap bags (used with muzzle-loading rifles), tool, trinket and money sacks, garters, bandoleers for side bags, and similar knick-knacks are made in the camps in profusion. All nevertheless presumably have some deliberate psychological associations in the makers' minds.

EXCURSIONS

"The man who seeks, with the whole force of his being, a way of life which shall be in harmony with his own deepest experience, is the religious man." These are the words of an English mystic, Middleton Murry. And Waldo Frank is such a man: a man seeking that revelation which shall make him one with himself and his comprehension. We are—or so it seems to us—on the verge of discovery. Science, we are told, has discarded the hard firm world of the senses; science approaches the occult. The artist already attuned to the currents not yet seized in the laboratories, goes beyond sense to Contact. Contact with the secret. There is danger. Therefore, new life. A new life charged with the new dangers. A new art glowing with danger, dynamic with danger, heroic. Especially is this true of America. Of Waldo Frank.

* * *

Waldo Frank is the New America he prophesies. It does not matter that he has been nourished in France, in Spain, in the penumbra of the Kabala; he has caught fire here and burns "luminous." In truth, he is more beautiful than the New America he hopes for and foretells; he has let his entire being draw from the land its deepest offerings. The gifts that might entice the eye alone and manacle the urge are quickly rejected.

* * *

The great splendor of Waldo Frank is that throughout his work one feels the urge to live, the urge for others to live, fully, in the full of reality and mystery, to drink deep.

* * *

There are other artists in America splendid in this way. But Waldo Frank is the first artist to have examined his hypotheses to the organizing of creed. It is based on the concept of Unity.*

* * *

Will the creed turn dogma? Will the religious man turn theologian? I think not, though he will need to be vigilant. Why do I think the creed will not fasten him to its form? Because it is motile and generative. Because within the concept of Unity there is ultimately the acceptance of all things as relevant. There is the experimenting with the seemingly unrelated in the hope of finding the copulative undefined.

yet escape the irrelevant? what is irrelevant?
the volatile escaping gas is somewhere;
nose for the scent of gas . . .
he sneezes, is the air aflutter?
and there is between the near and the vaguer hue

junction of color, gradation or the copulative
undefined . . .

* * *

It is the business of the artist to search for the thread that will join the seemingly irrelevant. In Waldo Frank's instance it has led him into deep clouds, into telepathy. What seems to preserve him from the threatened danger of losing himself forever in

"Huge earthy clouds . . ."

is that he is propelled forward and upward by the momentum of his whole being daring creation. And even in the clouds his art is "luminous": a beauty as holy as a psalm, as joyous as a paean, reverential, sacred, prophetic of strange recesses opening. **

* * *

Waldo Frank's belief in Unity reflects itself in every portion of his thinking and writing, from his *For a Declaration of War* to his acceptance of the novel or book as design. It is apparent in his very title "*City Block*," in his warning that the stories contained in the book of that name must be read in the succession in which they are placed.

* * *

To Mr. Frank the novel is design, not the story of a character or a relationship, or the concern with certain social implications. Of course, he aims at understanding his material, but it must all be comprised in a total pattern wherein the part is not greater than the whole. It will, I think, be admitted that heretofore the novel was not conceived as an art-form possessing in itself inherent characteristics to which the novelist's material, like the sculptor's, must conform. This does not, of course, exclude the right to borrow from other media; but here again the borrowing must be placed in the mould of the novel to take its form. (Sometimes Mr. Frank's prose runs into verse that obtrudes rather than contributes.)

* * *

The greatest fault, as it is always the greatest danger, in Mr. Frank's experiments is that his design is often of one hue. I think especially of "*Holiday*": it is dynamic certainly, but of the movement of a train on a straight-ahead track; it is design assuredly, but nearly all grey. Were it not for the "luminosity" of the author's self-glow, the umbra might be entirely swallowed. I do not gainsay the right of an artist to work in monotone if he wishes, but I believe the novel as design must seize the threads of color that spin about the center of the concept or idea (the material) and weave them into the fabric of the design.

* * *

It is interesting to compare Waldo Frank's *For a Declaration of War* with F. T. Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto*. There are

differences in content, but more clarifying are the differences in tone, the differences in approach. Frank, after an examination of convictions, achieves a synthesis which shall be his creed; Marinetti announces his creed refusing intelligent battle. Frank measures with all the knowledge born of his experience and rejects what he believes is not compatible with what he has profoundly lived and come to know. Frank is passionate; Marinetti is violent. Being passionate and selective, Frank denies the specious; being violent and uncritical, Marinetti accepts the violences of his immediate environment as final. It is not surprising, therefore, that Croniamantal, "the greatest (*Futurist*) poet in the world" should be destroyed by the mob. He has accepted their values, yet not being of them. Apollinaire, who was himself Croniamantal, destroyed a fine poet with the mob's vomit. Waldo Frank, being contemplative, will not receive the violences except to chain them for examination.

• • •

"Here," says Marinetti, father of futurism, "is Life, Force, Assertion — Noise, Speed, Vulgarity. Embrace the mob and pounce upon It. Yell with the Mob!" And Apollinaire's hero, Croniamantal, does so — and the Mob devours him who ate of Its garbage. Neither Apollinaire nor his translator, Josephson, recognize that the "supreme irony" is not the concept of the author nor the bourdon of the book, but their own non-recognition of their own pathetic acceptance of the slayer's values. The futurist, who is deceiving himself with the old, ineffectual battle-cries, God-Man, Decision, Power, embraces the bowls that contain the vomits of the Mob and then is startled when the vomits borne above his head bury him upon overturning. His is the stench, and not the smoke, of battle.

* * *

Some aestheticians, like T. S. Eliot, give forth the wearied, disheartened beauty of an emotion nibbled into jaded strips by an insatiable, sadistic intellect. Others of less subtle sensitivities, like Apollinaire, have let their minds be swallowed by their entrails; they have not been able to hold their reactions long enough to know how much of them were to be trusted. And so they yell that they may not hear their doubts. And they rush into the "supreme irony" of war and roar over the "glory" of it with the distracted, overwrought, life-weary "hero of Fiume."

THE RAMBLER

* SALVOS, New York: Boni and Liveright \$2.50.

** CHALK FACE, New York: Boni and Liveright \$2.00.

THE AMERICAN SCENE

LOS ANGELES LETTER.

Los Angeles, January 1925.

Slowly, and painfully, through the efforts of a few authentic artists, Los Angeles is establishing a creative rendezvous here and there; and now one may write a Los Angeles letter that need not sound like a Chamber of Commerce advertisement.

Those artists who seek material in the physical appearance of the city, and who would interpret the spirit of the West, if there be such a thing as a spirit of the West, soon find that their first impressions of Los Angeles are misleading, and that it is only by some unknown process of realization that they are made aware of the Los Angeles worth seeking for.

Los Angeles, transported by an incoherent bustle of noises and people, is no different from the average American city. One receives the same impression of Glory to God Americanism on its busy corners as in Chicago or anywhere else. It has no new or representative architecture. All of its buildings and homes are built in a purely imitative manner.

In Hollywood especially you will find homes in the Spanish style, or apartment houses with supposedly Egyptian fancies. Hollywood is the most significant suburb of Los Angeles, and is serving it most importantly. As the readers of *The Guardian* know, Hollywood is the motion picture center of the world. Around this stupendous industry, which a few artists are trying to develop into an Art, there has gathered the most imposing number of small minds. The service of Hollywood to Los Angeles is that it isolates itself as a city of bad art and small minds, and attracts, through the magnetism of its pretentious and empty glitter, all the dilettantes.

At the same distance as Hollywood from Los Angeles, but in another direction, lies Pasadena, which Gilmore Brown has made famous. Gilmore Brown and his Pasadena Community Playhouse have done much to lift the American stage from its commercial level. I have witnessed three performances there this year that have left a profound impression. I refer to their productions of Masefield's "Melloney Hotspur", Molnar's "Liliom" and Andreyev's "He Who Gets Slapped". I believe there is nothing better being done in this country.

And while I speak of the stage, I may mention that the Vilna Troupe is spending the season in Los Angeles. This famous group of foreign Yiddish artists is presenting the Yiddish classics, as well as masterpieces in other languages, in a truly brilliant manner.

Week after week Los Angeles art galleries are displaying the work of California artists. And week after week we are tortured by a monotonous, colorless photographic display of nature as it is supposed to exist in this part of the world. To quote Macdonald Wright, one of the few genuine artists of this city: "The ambition of the average California artist is to become an Eastman kodak". There has been practically nothing worth-while exhibited here by local artists since the Independent California Artists' exhibit two years ago, when such men as Boris Deutch, Macdonald Wright, Peter Krasnow, Max Reno and others were represented.

This city has witnessed the birth and death of quite a few representative literary magazines in the last few years. Now there are two or three magazines with a certain national standing. There is "To-Morrow", a lively monthly journal edited by that handsome Irishman, Marion Hatch, whose special hobby is to explode Hollywood's pet theories. Hatch is making a brave attempt, but of late has allowed his contributors to lower their literary standards. There are, however, some able men and women contributing to his pages. I refer to Jack Cooper, Dorothy Cartwright, and especially Challis Silvay, a very promising young poet who is also nationally known for his creation of the role of "Prince Punk Chow" in the well known light opera of that name.

"The Lyric West", the pioneer poetry journal of Los Angeles founded by Grace Atherton Dennen, has resumed publication after a year of silence, and has now added to its staff as active editor, Professor Roy Thompson. Professor Thompson is one of the few college professors I like, and although he leans a little towards the "sweet kiss me dear" in poetry (the chief failing of California poets is their unlovely sweetness), he will undoubtedly do some good work here.

Through modesty I have left "Four", the poetry quarterly for which I sometimes pay my fourth share to help publish, for the last. The work of W. H. Lench, formerly editor of "Pegasus", H. Thompson Rich, one time editor of the "Forum" magazine, and Yossef Gaer, the curly headed cynic who is perhaps better known for his plays and short stories, is known to readers of the special literary magazines. They are coming men in the American literary scene.

Los Angeles can never become quite Americanized; and many times I feel that the true Los Angeles is the city of the Padres and Missions — and I rejoice, for I love the subtle scented spirit of Old California. Away from the new Los Angeles, yet not so very far, one can find refuge in a sleepy little village like San Gabriel, and there, sheltered by the Missions and spirit of the Padres, dream of the time the lazy Spaniards held sway over a beautiful wilderness.

DAVID N. GROKOWSKY

NEW YORK LETTER

New York, January 1925.

"American" has been used as a derogatory adjective in the seven arts for many a long day. Now at last it is beginning to mean something complimentary: there are hopeful signs among our native artists, sculptors, musicians: Sherwood Anderson has written a singing American biography replete with American humor and telling the tale of an American author, "A Story Teller's Story"; the Theatre Guild of American New York has produced John H. Lawson's jazz symphony of American life, "Processional," with an Americancast and directors. Perhaps "American" will soon come into its long-expected heritage as a good, honorable, high-sounding adjective.

The New York stage this year shows the fruits of an American invasion. Last year the Moscow Art Theatre rightly held the center of the stage. This year they are not with us, and our natives have a chance to show their mettle. What is the result?

Of all the plays on Broadway — and in numbers there are certainly a formidable array — discounting "Candida" because it is English; "The Guardsman" because it is Hungarian; and "Processional" (polyphony in the drama) because I did not see it—"What Price Glory" remains the shining light. Laurence Stallings and Maxwell Anderson have achieved a unity of atmosphere, action, and human sympathy that are genuinely amazing. The war is their background, but never have they been in danger of writing a play with a propaganda. They have built up their three acts on human suffering, masculine pathos, and Rabelaisian humor. They have attained a pinnacle of writing for the American stage.

Of the scores of other plays that crowd Broadway, excluding "The Firebrand" as delicious farce frankly burlesque and delightfully entertaining, and "S. S. Glencairn," a group of sea plays, pleasant in conception and excellent in production, — we are left with two plays to deal with — two plays that have been loudly heralded since their openings: "They Knew What They Wanted" and "Desire Under the Elms"; the first a definite longing for something, the second only a vague longing.

The two plays are staged by the two most enterprising groups of theatre folk in America's theatrical Mecca — the Theatre Guild and the Provincetown Players. The Theatre Guild has achieved three successes this season; the Provincetown group has on its board such men as Kenneth MacGowan, Robert Edmond Jones, and Eugene O'Neill. Sidney Howard, whose name is emblazoned in the daily press as a promising young American, wrote "They Knew What They Wanted," and "Desire Under the Elms" was written by Eugene O'Neill.

I went to both plays with high expectations; I came away from both plays feeling disappointment at their failure to attain any inkling of greatness, and surprise at their many similarities of skeleton underneath their great differences of tone. Here in two playhouses desire reigned supreme — desire for a farm, and desire of the flesh. Sidney Howard is an optimist; not so Eugene O'Neill.

"They Knew What They Wanted" is the story, told in the conventional three acts, of Tony, a wealthy, good-natured Italian grown rich from vineyards in California, who falls in love with a waitress in Los Angeles. He sees her once, and woos her by mail. She knew what she wanted; rest, peace, the country, a farm, a view. Tony promised all that. She came out to the hills to find him the victim of an accident — sick abed with two broken legs. Tony is a mighty strong man, strong enough to sit up for the wedding ceremony the day Amy arrives. That night Amy is afraid, afraid of the country, of her middle-aged spouse. Joe, Tony's helper, young, handsome, congenial, is in the house. They spend the night together. Months pass, and Amy nurses Tony back to health. She grows to love him. She is to have a child — Joe's. Tony learns of it, believes that it was only one night's transgression, and takes Amy and the child to his heart. Joe goes out to a wandering life again.

Eugene O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms," in four acts, a multitude of scenes, and a setting for which the only word is trick — it shows the front of a two-story house, and as the people move from room to room, the walls are taken from the respective rooms — is in an entirely different tempo. Mr. O'Neill shows us Eben, motherless, with a father who brings home a second wife, Abbie, to his New England farm. Abbie's desire is the farm. Then when she sees Eben, young, strong, swarthy, desiring the farm, she wants him. Abbie has a baby, which her old husband thinks is his, but which is really his son's. The baby interferes with Eben's desire for the farm to be left to him as his legacy. Abbie kills the child. Both Abbie and Eben exit on the way to jail.

Both authors have written of wishes for something. Mr. Howard's people knew what they wanted, and they got it. Amy wanted rest. Tony wanted Amy. For a little, a very little while, youth called to youth, and Amy and Joe wanted each other. They had each other. Then Joe wanted to leave the farm, and rove again as he had roved. He left. Mr. Howard has written a character study of three amiable persons, and he has given his sex triangle a slightly new turn by letting Tony forgive Amy and welcome the other man's offspring. A pleasant enough play, but not profound.

Mr. O'Neill, on the other hand, has written a play that seems neither pleasant nor profound. None of the persons in the plays have desires that are understandable or plausible. They have to keep shrieking what they want time after time. Otherwise we could never

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understand their actions. Mr. O'Neill directs their desires from without. Their wishes never come from within.

All their wishes are frustrated. Eben wanted the farm, and got Abbie. Abbie wanted Eben, and got a murdered child. Old Ephraim, the father, wanted a wife and child, and got neither. Mr. O'Neill has given each of his characters things to want, has gone out of his way to put obstacles in their path, and then has further complicated matters by devising melodramatic methods of completely foiling any possibility of a normal ending. We found "Desire Under the Elms" a play that left us with a bitter taste, a dissatisfied feeling as though we had been cheated about these terribly sordid folk, and a desire to obliterate it from our memory as an O'Neill creation.

As for the productions, the Theatre Guild's cast, consisting of Pauline Lord, Glenn Anders and Richard Bennett leaves nothing to be desired. The Provincetown's assembly of men and women who articulate a New England dialect with obvious hardship and care to enunciate each syllable is just what the O'Neill play does not want.

MADELIN LEOP

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LAND OF JOURNEYS' ENDING

THE LAND OF JOURNEYS' ENDING, by Mary Austin, New York:
The Century Company. \$4.00.

Never, never would I or anyone else who knows anything about the Land of Journeys' Ending venture that that land is anything less than a region of complexities, cupping within itself unbelievable ranges of plant, animal and human life as well as geographic and climatic variety embracing fully three terrestrial zones. But why, I ask at the outset, just as I did in reading Mary Austin's book, does Mrs. Austin insist on adding to the complexities of the country with such comments as: "In the shut valley of Estancia, east of Oku, sacred Turtle Mountain of the Tewa, called Sandia by the Spanish-speaking, died Chilili, Tajiqui, Tenabo, Manzano, Abo, and Tabira"? I happen to know that she is speaking of cities that died, and I know where Chilili, Tajiqui, Tenabo and Tabira are situated. And I claim acquaintance with Sandia. But even so, her array of strange names confounds me. What must it do to the reader who has never seen the Rio Grande country or the giant cacti or the pueblos at Taos and Zuni?

"What I have drawn for you here is the ground plan," says Mrs. Austin in the parting paragraph of her book. And that, apparently, is purported to take care of what is left undone. That, and a prefatory statement that "if you find holes in my book that you could drive a car through, do not be too sure they were not left there for that express purpose."

Those waivers of responsibility, however, do not give the book a clear title. For instead of drawing a ground plan, Mrs. Austin has made on her sheet but a maze of those lines from which a readable ground plan could be drawn by someone schooled in ground plans. And, mixing figures, among those lines there are too many spaces through which a car could be driven with ease. It would take tremendous scheming to plot so many holes.

But Mrs. Austin says she is a prophet. So probably also claimed he who wrote the maze of figure and fears called the Book of Exodus.

Perhaps it will be well to say that I was born less than a hundred miles north of Mrs. Austin's locale, grew up among cow-punchers from the Southwest, spent a good many years down there where Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona jam together. And while I don't know the scientific name for many of the trees or bushes Mrs. Austin works into her book, thank God!, I do know

the sand and the 'dobe and the creosote bushes, a good many of the Indians, quite a number of the cayuses, and most of the canons from Mesa Verde south.

And I don't suppose I was any more disappointed in this book than a good many people I could name. For while it is an admirable compendium of Spanish and Indian names and dates of invasions and deaths, it doesn't bring through the sweep of those plains, the mad racing shadows of great white stallion-clouds, the nights with their mourning doves and their coyotes and their burrowing owls.

Here and there comes a high spot. Mrs. Austin has recreated in excellent fashion several periods in certain pueblos. But in a grasp of the whole thing, with an eye either to past or future, the book is utterly lacking. Now that I've laid it down, I feel like saying, "Well, now she's gathered the material, I wonder if she'll ever make a real book out of it."

I gladly say, however, that "The Land of Journeys' Ending" is a volume I will pack in my dunnage when I head west next summer. There are a lot of new things in it that I want to follow through. But I'll bet a brand new one-ear riding bridle that the eastern reader who doesn't know a sahuaro from a kiva will read half the first chapter, or less, and turn away in disgust with a snort something like: "What the devil is it? English? Spanish? or Tewa?" And if he does stick it out, when he gets through he'll sure feel and probably say, "Fine, but what is it?"

I have more than a vague suspicion that Mrs. Austin has used so much Spanish and Indian for more reasons than she admits. We all know her penchant for rhythm, her rhythm, that is, which she discovered. And Spanish words lend themselves to it. But as for its being impossible, as she claims, to translate such Spanish terms as *ambra* and *playa* into English, I must disagree. A Southwesterner will tell you that an *ambra* is a broad valley, and that a *playa* is either a beach or what used to be a beach. However, all the mystery disappears with full understanding of a term, and it usually changes the rhythm.

The community life and the religion of the Pueblenos, however, are presented strikingly well. I believe this is the first time I ever read so true and so sympathetic an account of those phases of the Southwest. It is only when one realizes that the Pueblenos had, until the Anglo-Saxons took them for wards, the only workable system of community co-operation and happy merging of individual, with group interests, that one begins to understand the enormity of the crime committed in the name of civilization. And when one goes to a Gothic cathedral and listens to a sermon on a God who looks like Santa Claus in a bath robe, a God who is selfish, jealous, vengeful — when one hears that, and then discovers that the "heathen" Pueblenos for thousands of years knew that God

was neither man nor beast, but was Power, Energy, Order, in everything, mountains, plains, trees, antelope, then one wonders just why the Pueblenos are wards of the United States instead of the teachers of theology and social science in our institutions of learning.

Right now — I, a product of the gnarling process we call education, smile in memory of the time only a few years ago when I spent afternoons sitting on the brink of a crumbled kiva on the top of Chimney Rock, near Pagosa Springs, in Colorado, and wondered how those primitives who built that kiva had raised their walls perfectly perpendicular, how they had mixed mortar that has since turned to sandstone, how they brought water, somewhere near that home site, now nearly a mile above the nearest spring or stream. All that the pedagogical engineers ever told me failed to answer the questions.

And I smile a bit differently as I remember afternoons of rambling over the cedar-covered flats of Mesa Verde. It is with a sigh that I hear the wind outside and remember the Rio Grande, which only last year Helen and I followed from El Paso to Santa Fe; to the camps we made along there during February, when we daren't leave water in anything overnight or we would find it burst out of bottom in the morning, frozen solid; to the sahuaro hills of Arizona, where we drove many, many days and saw few people; to the valley of the upper Colorado, in Utah, where the Moabites tell of their "unknown, undecipherable picture writing and pre-historic cliff houses" along the bluffs of that river; to the Grand Canon country, where men feel smaller than atoms; to the Painted Desert, with its agate and its unbelievable colors; to the Southwest, the Land of Journeys' Ending.

HAL BORLAND

MR. CABELL SELECTS HIS TROUBADOURS

FROM THE HIDDEN WAY. By James Branch Cabell. New York:
McBride. \$2.50.

*"Ettarre, I proffer my love anew,
And life with a jest at the world's expense;
And if for your favor I vainly sue —
Why, what will it matter a hundred years hence?"*

COMFORT FOR CENTENARIANS, FROM THE
HIDDEN WAY.

"Now, it is in my mind to make verses."

STRAWS AND PRAYERBOOKS.

Consider it casually: In a rite, at its worst, ridiculous, the bells, this cool preternaturally blue evening, clamor their summons to worship. Tong peals upon deliberate tong, and laid in between stroke and reverberation is a continuous humming murmur which brazens through the currents of air, filtering through to wrist, to arm, to bosom, instilling in all the large awe of their untranslatable being, causing a pressure of melancholy warmth which turns the sore bosom into a lake of reminiscence.

No scientific explanation can delay this internal glamorous activity. In that sense our "real" life is analogous. The echoes of our actual selves pass into and join in our romances; the husk we give to routine, as a trinket, is shown in a matter of course, while the feeling which bought it is kept buried. We are in continued warfare with the factual fictions which necessity has opened against us. The empyrean, sun, stars, we do not quarrel with nor strive against, save when practical philosophies bind us to them by hardened habit or self-engrossed egotism. The romantic glimmer, which is aspiration stripped to naive nudity, is forever flooding up despite all rigorous exercise of reason. Consider how, in a civilization, we think, begun about twelve thousand years ago, facts have been singularly inadequate to circumvent Mr. Cabell. Consider how vital is that adventurous impulse, under which, for example, in the eighth century Li-Tai-Po, with rash spirits admittedly in him, sprang from his boat into the water to embrace a reflection of the moon, and drowned, while the darkening waters about him still propped that elusive rib of light.

In our lives, we see, there are acres of walls, and few expanses that allow men the broad moment of their freedom. Down the jogtrot way no Facts ride their palfreys, for the Facts are captious girls, as malleable and as unenduring as the generations. For Facts as we allow them to compel our respects, even your high-minded scientist will agree, exist but to temporize with time. But that which has been common to every emergent from the human womb,

which is the reconciliation of a warm mind with its innate desire for perfect grace, which has been The Argument of aspiration against time, space and mortal being, is a quality which no Fact can modify. In an existence where we recognize nothing to be stable and everything, including love and war, so to presume, unnecessarily unreasonable, we shall ever season them with shadows whispered from our politest recesses, even though we may suspect these to be providently divine.

The essence of this philosophy lived its brightest in that country over which Mr. Cabell assumed godhead. He gave it its fable, its song, its deep-lipped tradition which spoke so tranquilizingly its most fervent muses. The poet knew then, as the poet must know today, that his language required elevation and poise that it might be a fitting ornament — nay, a means of life — to the problems of his compassion. Helen and Dorothy, whose white cheeks bore a thousand Fausts, (in how soft a down!), and the austere gaze of a whole world of men, held for us those balances between frigid unattainability and compassionate pity. In them lived the symbol of all life, summed from ages — the flattery, the cheating, the recompense, the intolerable beauty, the staggering delusion. For them gallants breathed away the walls of cities and gathered roses. Their dreams, pitiful caressing things, sprang between their sexes, flung like so much transient air, in a battle of transfigured prejudice and pride, striving artfully to maintain unviolable boundaries. For them men turned (and some returned) to that chivalry which became their agreement long years ago, to forget a little more than may seem possible what a vacuity there is in us, which every time falls short of its simplest aspiration. They, too, the lovely swans of Troy and the Garden Beyond Sunrise, feel the trouble of mockery. Life becomes a skeptical mask, comic, defiant, and propitiatory as before the figure of Jurupari, between the two riddles of man and woman, who have lost their dreams and bear their loss a little like cowards, or perhaps because they have humor indeed, and contend with each other in endless foibles of irony, and with a certain zest which is appreciatory. Memory they impale on a delicate epigram, for that, they know, is the surest way to foil it. Not altogether. For it loses all tinct of profanity as periods and accidents carry away something of its lucidity. Then it comes on wings, and these, surely, are the wings of regret, and one knows how, in our knowledge of things past, they did not quite fit within the stiffness of a great principle.

Thus by gradations we progress through Poictesme to Mr. Cabell, whose deliberate malice springs so much out of a concern for beauty, whose irony, so much discussed and secretly envied, defaces the placid columns of our moral assumptions, whose tenderness and urbanity so politely finger the uses of provincial scrupulousness, whose accurate gestures hide a little, but not very well,

the impulse of a sentiment which should be semenaried in self-conscious reserve. One knows how well the pretense of a little surface insincerity carries an admiring populace. For certain gestures in our fair have impressed Mr. Cabell — those incongruous, grotesque, vague, and a little hollow — but in fashion pregnant. And he has used them disdainfully, but with a smoulder of passion the polite dexterity of a thin wafer cannot wholly conceal. These qualities of irony and malice, urbanity and tenderness, have been endlessly spelled over by the critics, and even your average man of business could (if you will allow it) apprehend these fundamental characteristics of our author. But we have not clearly allotted these phases of his mind to their proper sphere. For here they are not ends nor even are they tools wholly, but the coagulation of a sequence of accidents distinguishingly human. Their secret we may comprehend in the retractions of *Armata*.

Even thus through the now re-edited poems of *From The Hidden Way*, through planhs and sirventes of Provencal, the Italian and Latin, which, with his usual serene diffidence, he gave into the hands of Raimbaut de Vaqueiras and Antoine Riczi and other personages, some cloaked with his pseudonyms, and made theirs. There is, indeed, an occasional piece which is strangely modern in inclination; in a manner, that is, so robustious, ready and open-handed that we may claim it in the name of a twentieth century mannerism. This is extremely occasional. Lacking a few pieces mainly in the latter section of the volume which have much music but little discipline, they are composed with such elaborate art that it is now and then a sober question whether the book is not for their own matter and because of the age they so cleverly resurrect after all a selection from little-known troubadours inspired by Rochegude's *Parnesse Occitanien*. A shock even for the initiate is promised in the catalogue of the Ballad of Plagiary.

I will not here inquire into metre, rhythm, or content other than I have noted, which would compel the reconsideration of a period in a study not purported by this article, and I am not unexhilarated by this excuse to evade a present responsibility which would insist upon at least a volume of comparison and analysis. There is in mind a sympathy for that asperity in which the poet bids the critic lay his weapon at the threshold. For if the artificer has cunningly contrived his artifice, whose concern is the artifice of his cunning? The last thought must turn consummately upon the feeling that invests the critic: here, of a certainty, is poetry vested purely in art, and truly, a living poet is getting but a faint mead of his due. Why, my astute reader! Nero, to borrow an anecdote from Landowska, goes to Greece to compete for the music prize, and takes with him five thousand persons trained to applaud. Alas that the poets of our principal streets should imitate the timbrel of their clamor.

MICHAEL NADEL

THE GROWTH OF SOUNDS

STUDIES IN ENGLISH RHYMES FROM SURREY TO POPE.

By H. C. Wyld — E. P. Dutton, New York: \$2.00.

"The pronunciation of a word, at any time, is determined by the usage of the educated at that time." This statement, while it may with sufficing accuracy indicate the manner in which the accepted pronunciation of a word is established, gives a false idea as to how the sound attained its status. The educated person, acquiring his speech from the cultured before him, would tend to perpetuate the sounds of the preceding generations; whereas, just as our vocabulary grows largely from the recognition of one-time colloquialisms, so our pronunciation changes through the rise to respectability of the utterance of the uneducated. Until the middle of the last century, the influential men of the United States and England often came to the centers of industrial or political activity bearing ineradicable marks of the section that produced them. That dialect which Chaucer's virtue raised to English was freely mixed with sounds from other (till then equally valid) dialects; in many cases two sounds of a word existed side by side until the time of Pope. Imitation being the basis of pronunciation, the influence of nurse, servants, and playmates sent the child to the scene of his life's activity with tendencies developed; from these only a great pressure of opinion would force him to depart. As there was for generations no large agreement, in regard to certain sounds, this undetermined margin grew to fixity slowly and by power of early uncultured forces working through however cultured an adult. Once a sound was accepted as the correct pronunciation, it would naturally be employed by succeeding generations as they came, and would tend — yielding only to tremendous weight of indifference or ignorance — to become permanently established.

Since the middle of the Nineteenth Century the growth of public schools has considerably weakened the influence of illiterate sources of pronunciation, by affording opportunities for teachers to impose upon children the sounds adults consider correct, and for the sense of shame to strike at a more impressionable age. Thus, in the past century and a half, the nasal sound of the suffix "ing" has forced its way out of unwilling mouths, and has invalidated, or reduced to apologetic apostrophe, such formerly sound rimes as ruin, strewing; summon, coming; etc. Perhaps this sound will become current, and we shall witness the spectacle of canons of taste working from the few to acceptance by the many. Should this phenomenon become general, a fixity in pronunciation would be inevitable; a fixity that would tend to press out of the language the rich colorings of dialect and cant. Fortunately, there will always

be many whose use of the language is unhampered by concern with the subtleties and the fine points that are assumed by the cultured and that busy the scholar; such persons, through their homely, coarse, freer approach to life, will continue to enrich the language with vivid phrase and hearty sound.

These thoughts were remotely suggested by Mr. Wyld's volume, the title of which belies its nature. The book is a consideration of such rimes, from Surrey to Pope, as seem bad to our ears today, to discover whether they were valid when written. Though avoiding the phonetic alphabet in order to attract the more general reader, Mr. Wyld will surely draw only the interested student. And, despite an awkward style — "differ from" is used for "differ with"; one sentence begins "Therefore, since, as"; etc. — the student will find a clear presentation of the facts, and the conclusion that, in the period discussed, poets who used rimes were very careful to match them.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

LAWRENCE IN AUSTRALIA

THE BOY IN THE BUSH: *By D. H. Lawrence and M. L. Skinner.*
New York: Thomas Seltzer. \$2.00.

It is fairly obvious that Lawrence has had a not too heavy hand in the construction of "The Boy in the Bush." It is not the Lawrence of "Kangaroo," "Aaron's Rod," and "Women in Love," that tired, perplexed, argumentative Lawrence. The "Boy" is a masculine version of the adventurous Ursula Brangwen in "The Rainbow." The two women who tease and allure and torment and delight the "Boy" are more sophisticated versions of "Dora" and "Miriam" in "Sons and Lovers." The minor characters, the setting, and many of the episodes are too racily of Australia to be other than Miss Skinner's own contribution. The collaboration has been unusually happy; each complements the other. The "Boy" is perhaps the most objective and extraverted character that Lawrence has depicted. It goes without saying that there is more action in the yarn itself. In fact, it is the most popular and most entertaining of all the books which bear Lawrence's name; yet it does not compromise his restless, mystical questing. That, simply, is become implicit in the career of the "Boy."

Jack Grant is shipped to Australia because he threatened to become a ne'er-do-well in England. His father was a British army officer and his mother a colonial; it is something of her ample, restful mystery which Jack finds in her land. At first Jack is lost in an alien world, as helplessly ungeared as his saddle and other conventional traps from a Bond Street shop. Jack soon becomes that conqueror, that captain, that he-man, without dubiety and qualification, for whom Lawrence was hankering in "Kangaroo."

The characterization of Jack begins with a sense of sin surviving from the dissenting admonitions of his aunts; he interlards his reflections with quotations and figures from the Bible, from which the aunts have read to him. It is unlike Lawrence, unlike that Will Brangwen of "The Rainbow" who identified himself with the vertical aspirations toward God of the Gothic cathedral, and, for the rest, derived satisfaction in singing hymns and looking at stained glass windows. Yet perhaps there is a conviction of depravity stalking Lawrence in his most exalted moods. Perhaps that accounts for his insistent and somewhat pedestrian exhortations on the subject of the dark gods in "Kangaroo," and the "Fantasia of the Unconscious." There was something almost false. It was as if Lawrence were less giving vent to a paean of praise for the unstudied, innocent life of the senses and subliminal instincts and

primitive impulses and desires than talking very loud in order to convince himself.

To return to Jack. The character soon takes matters into his own hands. He is a glorified animal. The wrestling match between Jack and the huge old male kangaroo, in imminent risk of death, is startling and thrilling as any theatrical trick. Yet it is profoundly related to Lawrence's vision of life in the bush, of life anywhere, for that matter. It becomes a symbol of Lawrence's acceptance of the Australian condition. He is no longer querulous, as in "Kangaroo," because Australia has no class distinctions, and is not worried over a possible lapse into anarchy, which may possibly betray his own bewilderment at losing his known landmarks and having nowhere to go and nothing to guide him in his passionately desired spiritual pilgrimage into the being of the Australian land. "The Boy in the Bush" has only a faint echo of the marvelous visualizations of the dark brooding continent, its flora and fauna, which enriched "Kangaroo." It posits less "overwhelming questions," and achieves an almost perfect synthesis. Who will collaborate with Lawrence in an American novel?

JOHN W. CRAWFORD

THE CADENCES OF ESCAPE

THE KING OF ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER. By Lord Dunsany.
New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The tales of Dunsany belong to the literature of escape which is naturally one kind of reaction to the smudgy rigidities of the modern world. In this industrial age the artist may, according to his nature, adopt one of three attitudes: he may, by a romantic positivism, glorify the mechanical forces as the protagonists of a new order, more or less heroic and beneficent; or he may take the method of protest, expending his energies in invective and satire and disillusion; or, disregarding them as far as possible, he may find his solace in the past, or in a fantasy that is sufficient unto itself and reck not of mushroom civilizations.

Though the third category, in which Dunsany falls, may represent a sort of ostrich-like courage, it has certainly always been a legitimate province of art. It would seem to be of a higher creative order, indeed, than the literature of protest, which is of negative value and amounts largely to a clearing-away of debris. And the popularity in which the Dunsany tales are held is an indication that they have a real fascination for modern readers.

Dunsany's fantasies, however, are a great deal more than mere throw-backs to a day when tales of wonder were an organic part of folk-literature. They are in the first place original creations; his fairy world is one of his own imagining, spaceless and timeless, though, to be sure, with a somewhat mediaeval cast; and persons, places, things derive their singularity not simply from the unusual names and attributes which Dunsany has composed for them, but from a cadence of language and a method of treatment that are peculiarly Dunsany's own. A melancholy fatality broods over Dunsany's heroes and heroines; they seek and do not find; they are valiant and yet are often defeated; their cravings are with utmost difficulty satisfied, if they are satisfied at all; and even their hour of victory is a little bitter. And under all the stories runs a faint trace of symbolism, not so obtrusive as to be easily unravelled, yet pervasive enough to make you feel its presence. Lastly, by the side of Dunsany's rapture in old, far-off things, we must recall the occasional bursts of indignation against things ugly or wordly, and see in these the true cause for his escape from the uncouth present into time-dimensions of his own creating.

Of his latest book all these afore-mentioned things can be said. "*The King of Elfland's Daughter*" is like other Dunsany tales in every respect save that of length. It is virtually the theme of "*Carcassonne*" done into a full-length novel, and done so well that

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you are a little startled to see it, for you had not suspected that the Dunsany method was capable of such large extensions. It is the tale of a village which trafficked a little in magic, so far indeed as to marry off their king to Elfland's princess, and it tells how at length, after a strange series of complications, Elfland possessed that village and its people. The prose is as fine as Dunsany has written; and there is no better of its particular variety, which plays with gorgeous modern variations and subdued tones on the ancient cadences first struck in English literature by Malory and the chroniclers of romance.

DONALD DAVIDSON

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

POPULATION PROBLEMS by *Edward Byron Reuter Ph. D.*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, \$2.00. — "The present volume undertakes to state in a very simple, non-technical way, a few of the related problems of the population. It makes no pretence to completeness and no effort to advance a general population theory. It contains little that is new to the specialist in social science; it contains much that should prove of interest to the beginning student and to the general reader." Dr. Reuter has thus limited the field of his inquiry, and by not venturing into the realm of the speculative, he has produced a conservatively scientific text-book. The problems of population are treated in reference to number, distribution and quality. Dr. Reuter has come under the influence of the popular criticism levelled against Malthus, and because of that his chapter on "The Mathusian Theory of Population" did not appear very satisfactory to me. Much of the Mathusian doctrine has been discarded by the scientist. That it should be so was, perhaps inevitable. But much of it still remains. Dr. Reuter's explanations of population growth are purely Mathusian, and the old Mathusian categories live again but in a modern garb. The Essay on Population and its author have been recently subjected to severe and very often unfair criticism. It is so easy to find fault with the man and his work in the light of the one-hundred and twenty-five years of scientific experimentation that separate us from the period in which Malthus lived. The majority among scholars, however, will endorse the view expressed by Dr. Raymond Pearl that "from the only premises which existing knowledge a century and a half ago made possible, Malthus reasoned about the future course of population with nearly faultless logic." It was the development of transportation, power resources and large scale production, "which upset Malthus' calculations as to the time when population saturation would make its effects uncomfortably felt." Malthus was in no position to prophecy the remarkable growth in the arts and sciences, nor could he possibly foresee the development of contraceptive methods and the installation of a birth-control clinic in every modern hospital. To blame him for such short-comings is not criticism but sheer nonsense.

"Population Problems" has many a surprise in store for the one-hundred per cent American. Dr. Reuter demolishes the pseudo-scientific theories of race superiority so fervently expounded by Messrs. Grant, Stoddard and McDougall. His treatment of the negro-problem is scientifically unprejudiced. Dr. Reuter believes that the negro will be ultimately absorbed by the surrounding white population and that the race problem will disappear. He does not accept the myth of Anglo-Saxon race superiority, nor does he value very highly the results of the intelligence tests. His analysis of the American culture complex is, however, superficial and does not show the insight displayed by H. M. Kallen in his more recent study of the culture and democracy of the United States.

H. S.

COLLECTED POEMS of *Edwin Arlington Robinson*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, \$3.00) — This collected edition of Mr. Robinson's poems emphatically designates the singular importance of Mr. Robinson in American poetry. Before his time no American had fully exploited the older forms; Walt Whitman came with his indigenous song while American poets had not yet learned to control the devices they had accepted as their heritage. Mr. Robinson was the first American to control these devices and to control their potentialities. But his significance is greater than this: with a perspicacity not unlike clairvoyance

he has sought and revealed the strange dark treasures within man — a mission few poets, and fewer Americans, have dared to take upon themselves. And this Mr. Robinson did when little tin canaries sang in papier mache trees to make American poetry a toyland affair. It must be remembered that while poets still do this, there are many who seek where there were few who sought larger pastures and sterner tasks — and Mr. Robinson still looms tall among the many.

ELIMUS, by B. C. Windeler (Paris: Three Mountains Press) — The one satisfaction in a very shoddy book is the frontispiece, a woodcut, by D. Shakespear. With a force difficult to obtain in so rigid a medium as wood, "driving rain beat on the deserted quay." Otherwise, the book ought never have been printed; the story is trite, never for a moment rescued from its flatness by a spark of discernment, either rhythmic or of character, running into such sententious yellowsheet metaphors as "A paper pass to the Olympic games of chance fortunes." Of the eleven other cuts, two or three are fair (that is, good in the proportioning of black and white, but erring in total rendition — the purpose of an illustration); the remainder fail because they endeavor to render the unrenderable, which should convict the artist either of indifference or of not knowing the limitations of her medium.

THE SARDONIC ARM by Maxwell Bodenheim (Chicago: Covici-McGee — Life most frequently presents a judicious balancing, in that sharpness of mind to comprehend the world is matched with skill in polishing the shield one holds before one's eyes to view the world. The fact is furthermore expressed in fable: as of the dog that drops its bone for what it beholds in the water; or of the no less recurrent Narcissus; or of the lad who parades his folly or masks his terror in unequally agile posturing over a well, from which, grimacing upward, lures the shifting spectacle he so boldly identifies with what lieth at the bottom. Such persons as grasp the great inanity so tightly that their hand closes on itself unperceiving, such as are included in the Baudelairean category "with skin impervious to scorn" alone escape the call of the same horror-stricken poet: Hypocrite lecteur! Mon semblable, mon frere!"

For it is not to be denied that the astatic enacts on life's well-brink the sorry spectacle of cutting off his nose to save his face. Nor is Mr. Bodenheim, whose sardonic arm sustains before his eyes a burnished shield while he deftly introduces irony between the ribs of the world he sees, first to approach the discovery that each man chooses for the objects of his disdaining the death by which he dies. It is the fallacy of separating the object from the subject that leads men to complacent derision of things outside themselves; one may conclude that their play grows frantic in the measure of their suspicion that only in the union of these elements is self. Mr. Bodenheim, having sensed the immanence of the world, throws this recognition out of the sphere of his living by dangling it, poisoned jeweled blade, over his toying fingers on the golden chain of art.

J. T. S.

PIPERS AND A DANCER by Stella Benson. (New York: The Macmillan Co. \$2.00) — When I closed Miss Benson's new novel my immediate reaction to it was: "It's clever, sophisticated, and has good characterization." Then I sat back and wondered why the book, though it held my interest to the last page, left me a little cold, a good deal warm, and not at all fervent about anything there. My conclusion was that the author has the eye to see, and the ability to describe vividly, and gracefully, at times even whimsically, what she sees, but unfortunately she chooses to let her brain rather than her heart direct her pen. The result is we see clearly, and understand perfectly, never, however, are we permitted to feel. Miss Benson is always before us, like a school teacher before a

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blackboard, pointing, giving the reader the impression of receiving everything second-hand.

Miss Benson's story is of a girl who goes to China to marry a man who is fat, a bore, and middle-aged. What is probably most disappointing in the novel is that the heroine is the one character in the book who is unsatisfactory. Poor Ipsie is only a mechanical device for the author to tell a story charmingly.

H. S. B.

BROWNSTONE FRONT, by *Gilbert W. Gabriel*, (New York: The Century Co. \$2.00)—

"Brownstone Front" is a novel of good atmosphere and bad characterization. Since the atmosphere of the book has no more to do with the development of the plot than the backdrop of a play with the fate of the players, Mr. Gabriel's accuracy and color cannot save his work.

House. The House of the Seven Gables and the Usher residence connect upon their ants has intrigued many an author. Think of the macabre effect created by Bleak House. The House of the Seven Gables and the Usher residence upon their unfortunate tenants. Who of us can ever shake off the spell of that strange combination shop and house, with its passages and parlors, that quintessence of the Five Towns and what they stood for, which played so significant a part in the lives of Constance and Sophia Baine? "Brownstone Front" is a bastard offspring of "The Old Wives' Tale."

Though brief in comparison with the Bennett masterpiece, Mr. Gabriel's novel seems long because it lacks the unity and the coherence which make detail vital and significant. However, it is fine descriptive writing. An election night in Brooklyn, the salty smell of Gloucester, Grandfather Bray's tobacco shop, the Lafayette and Madison Square all live and glow at Mr. Gabriel's sure brush strokes. But they cannot cast even a reflected glow upon the wooden figures of Robert and the inanimate Emily. They remain puppets until the end, against a background which is ironically more living than they.

Y. N.

CONTRIBUTORS CORNER

VERSE VERSUS PROSE — In this syncopated age of ours, it may be well to consider the words of those who withhold from the current, and attempt to stand on some unmoving shore that they may measure the flowing glacier or lava-coursing of today. To leap for a moment out of the flux that encompasses us and that we are — have not they accomplished the feat? — and mark their words. I shall be specific: those who have made, or have read with enjoyment, what in their ignorance they call free verse, should ponder the distinction that William M. Patterson, Ph. D., of Columbia University, has made, the most generally applied hitherto, between prose and verse.

Before viewing the doctor's diagnosis, let us attempt to judge his clearmindedness, insofar as we may, through his own prose. The last paragraph of his chapter on Vers Libre begins: "In conclusion, we may say that the recent American poets who employ 'free verse' give us many effective and welcome phrasings of their realistic view of life. Their independence as to form is occasionally stimulating. On the whole, however, their message will always be blunted for those 'timers' who feel, in reading or hearing their productions, the disquieting experience of attempting to dance up the side of a mountain." In connection with this passage, please to observe:

1) that the thought which is really "in conclusion" of the chapter begins with the third quoted sentence; the first two qualify and oppose it; logically calling for the word "Although" — which the author omits.

2) that the adjective used as a climax in sentence two is most Vague; we do not gather whether the doctor is stimulated emotionally, to applaud or to offer posterior application; or intellectually, to imitate or excoriate or scorn.

3) that (Reread the last quoted sentence) "the message will be blunted" for *anyone* who feels the experience the doctor mentions, not merely for certain "timers" — presumably the old-timers.

4) also, that twice in the passage quoted the author quietly takes for granted ideas that are obviously doubtful, if not clearly untrue — or else he has chosen the wrong words. "Their realistic view of life" assumes that all the "recent American poets who employ free verse" are realistic. "Their message" implies a specific purpose many may well deny.

5) finally, that one might not object, in the last sentence, to the author's conversion of an analogy into an identity, by metaphor, if only the doctor did not insist on having his "timers" feel the experience rather than experience the feeling.

This detailed examination gives such evidence of loose thinking as justifies us in hesitating to accept the author's conclusions without careful examination. He reached his final declarations after a series of tests made on twelve observers, mainly with the following selections: a sentence from Walter Pater; "about" (we admire the author's exactness) six bars from a Chopin Nocturne; part of a sentence from Henry James; a haphazard arrangement of seventeen words; a haphazard arrangement of musical notes; and part of "The Temple of Memphis," by Cyril Scott. When these were literally drummed into the ears of the observers, it was discovered that to the "aggressively rhythmic" timer* they all assume a rhythmic arrangement, whereas to more passive timers they seem haphazard or arhythmical. Which proves nothing at all save that human ears differ.

Yet out of this experimentation comes the declaration that from the point of view of actual experiment (as opposed to individual theories) and of the timer (the only type of person, we are assured, likely to reach a sound conclusion) . . . comes the declaration that "language is regarded as rhythmically PROSE so long as the accented syllables and an under-unit series of subjective time-syncope and substitution predominate over coincidence, between intervals" (this under-unit being that into which the particular individual instinctively breaks continuing sound). "When coincidence predominates, language is rhythmically VERSE." It seems to Dr. Patterson to follow naturally, that all language must be one of these or the other: "What room is there for a tertium quid? Nothing remains but the purely hypothetical case where syncope and coincidence are exactly balanced in their occurrence, or a mere confusion of mind." Therefore free verse is reduced to a "jumping back and forth from one side of the fence to the other," provoking the unpleasant experience mentioned in the quotation with which our attempt at analysis begins.

May I suggest two points, in this connection? First: if there is a distinction between prose and verse, it is of the same general nature as that between good and evil, between top and bottom, etc. If the doctor will take a stick, mentally mark one end "top" and the other "bottom," then cut the stick in half, he will discover that by this attempt to separate opposites he has created identity. I will not question the accuracy (with yardsticks for measuring good and evil unprovided, and his human yardsticks for prose and verse so variable) with which the doctor might make his division central. Secondly—though this is a matter developed at too great length by Gilbert Seldes and others to require more than mention here: this is an age of syncope; the imposition of a new accent rhythm on the old is the key to much that is not told in the philosophies; and the sense of syncope today reaches from aba-weaving to zymo-technics. Why, then, must we bar it from verse? If the banana-

peddler can sing his shortage, and more serious musicians pour their overflow, in syncopation, what mere coincidence must limit the bard? Why not, rather, deliberately and completely syncopated poems? Poems of a syncopated if sinful age? Why, in short, must verse, by however well-meaning metronomes and kymographs, be reduced to a Patter-song?

Between the writing and the rewriting of this brief consideration, John McClure published (in the *Double Dealer* of December 1924) an article based upon this very point: he calls the syncopation in poetry "countersound;" and says that free verse, "when it is really good verse, is likely to be simply a skillful exercise in countersound throughout." Mr. McClure makes a rapid survey of poetry to bring forward examples of what he seems to regard as a new discovery; he calls the paper "Introduction to Counter-Sound." It begins: "Counter-Sound in verse I define as the development of contrasting variations on a basic rhythmical theme, the harmonizing of oppositional cadences." This, of course, is exactly what is meant by syncopation, set up by Dr. Patterson eight years ago as the characteristic that distinguishes prose from verse.

What distinction would I offer to supplant Dr. Patterson's? None. I have not yet mentioned that by his own observers, passages of Tennyson and of Browning written as prose were beaten as prose (syncopation predominating); this partially indicates the impossibility of definition. Prose and verse share the fate of all terms (in ethics, esthetics, etc.) that involve subjective standards; they defy any save personal definition. Verse may be syncopated, prose coincidental — not only according to the individual, but (as Dr. Patterson's own observers indicate) according to the hour, the weather, the mood, the health, concomitant. I should suggest, then, until the Ten Commandments of Language be vouchsafed us in graven stone, so that Dr. Patterson's goods can be mine, and my evils his, that every reader be allowed without interference — as he must, despite it — to label a work as he will. Croce uses the word "poetry" to include all writing in which imagination predominates. Prose... Verse... To each the stones that have fallen to each. Or, if we desire a more universal designation, let us take, whenever it is known, that which the writer of the passage himself has chosen. And rest content. It is not Leviathan, but the crocodile, we can detect by the clock.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

A NOTE ON THE SARAJEVO MURDER — The historian is now having a hard time of it. During the war he allowed himself to become a government mouthpiece and helped to flood the country with tons of propaganda. He either believed in the many lies he spread or quietened his scruples by incessantly repeating, *a la Coue*,

the old formula, "It is for the good of the country." The myth that he thus helped to create and spread will outlive him, for his present recantations reach only the ears of the few. The great mass remains untouched by the recent work of Sidney Fay, G. O. P. Gooch and G. Lowes Dickinson. Their findings are for the historical society, and their lengthy dissertations are printed in the "dry-as-dust" pages of the historical review. Prof. H. E. Barnes has taken upon himself the arduous task of disseminating the results of their investigations, and Sidney Fay has, for a moment, left the cloistered walls of the university and is lecturing to the layman on the documentary evidence concerning the origin of the war. But their enterprise appears to me almost hopeless. Barnes has written many articles for the *New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The American Mercury* and several other periodicals of like nature. But what does it all amount to? How many readers can he reach? For in our dealings with this problem we are forced to consider the multitude to be reached as well as the quality of the message. The task of the historian is hopeless because he does not control the machinery that moulds public opinion, and because the great masses are no longer in a receptive mood. The people are tired of the war. They have had too much of it, and war-talk has begun to weary them.

Such were the thoughts that crowded my mind, when I read in a recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian*, M. E. Durham's article "New Information on the Sarajevo Murder." Much has been written on the economic and political causes of the late war, but the actual deed that started hostilities remained in obscurity. The published extracts from the reminiscences of M. Ljuba Jovanovitch have now thrown a light on that, too. M. Jovanovitch was the Minister of Education in the then Serbian Cabinet, and was recently the President of the Serbian Senate. His disclosures have the air of authenticity. He believes that "The time has not yet come to tell all," but what he does give us is immensely important and extremely interesting.

"I do not recollect if it were at the end of May or the beginning of June when one day M. Pashitch told us that certain persons were making ready to go to Sarajevo to kill Franz Ferdinand, who was to be feted there on Vidovdan." He worked further in this matter with Stojan Potitch, then Minister of Interior, but he told this much to us others.

As they told me afterwards, this plot was prepared by a secretly organized circle of men and by the patriotic students of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian circles in Belgrade.

M. Pashitch and we others said, and Stojan agreed, that he should order the frontier guard on the Drin to stop the crossing over of the youths who had left Belgrade for the purpose.

But these frontier guards, too, belonged to the organization,

and they did not execute Stojan's order, and, as he told afterwards, said that the order reached them too late, and the youths were already over the border. Thus failed the government attempt to prevent the prepared attack."

The Serbian Government had three weeks at their disposal. Had they sincerely wished to avoid the consequences of the crime, they would have pursued more stringent methods in checking the plot. They had the knowledge and the power to nip the conspiracy in the bud. They could have communicated with the Austrian Government and informed them of the great danger. But instead, they made half-hearted attempts, and when the order did reach the guards on the Drin, it was announced to have been "too late."

The Sarajevo murder was not the cause of the war. It was, however, an excellent excuse, and who knows what would have happened to Europe had the conspiracy been crushed in time? For the accidental plays as important a role in the life of nations as it does in the life of individuals.

HERMAN SILVERMAN

A NEW VIEW OF HENRY D. THOREAU — M. Leon Balzagette is inspired. Unshackled and freed from the considerations of biographical form, he is borne aloft on the wings of his ecstasy. With the dexterity of magic, he lifts the past into the present, invests the shades of Henry David Thoreau with cosmic life, and attends him in his peregrinations through a nature-bound universe, admonishing or glorifying in eloquent panegyric.

In a suggestive note to his readers, M. Balzagette writes:

"To finish (the book) remained the task of certain of (Thoreau's) contemporaries, members of his circle. What the following pages owe to their invaluable testimony is so evident that it has not been thought necessary to emphasize this indebtedness by crowding the book with notes, as if it laid any claim to erudition. Nevertheless, this absence of references, ill-judged as it may be, must not be taken to imply that this portrait-study has been inspired by any desire less exacting than their own for the pure and simple truth. It merely means that behind this truth there was perhaps another, less often sought for, but no less moving after these vanished years."

In his quest for that 'other truth', no tedious documents, lengthy quotations and endless anecdotes encumber these biographical scenes with their ponderosity. (Balzagette is no ordinary biographer.) But Emerson, Alcott, Walt Whitman he has sought out and breathed life into them by decree of his omnipotent divinity. They are the living background against which Thoreau's personality and philosophy stand out free, in marble-like relief.

Thoreau revealed himself to none but that one unfailing, silent friend,—his Journal. It understood what he imparted to it without comment or contradiction. What there was of it was true, Thoreau's truth, to be sure,—a faithful mirror of his own likeness, benign companion of his blessed seclusion. With his silent guide, M. Bazalgette dived down beyond the shallows to the depths of this incomprehensible genius, and discovered rare treasures hidden there, and not a few of the dark places as well.

Ralph Waldo Emerson had partaken of the early and rare fruits of Thoreau's youthful admiration, but later, he stumbled over the hard, impeding rocks, and failed to taste fully of the riper richness.

Bazalgette points to Thoreau. There is a note of pity and of rebuke in his voice:

"You stand there frozen, waiting—waiting for what?—with that bashfulness, that infernal bashfulness that makes you shrink back from your chin to your fingers instead of making the gesture the other may be waiting for—whatever it may be, a touch on the shoulder, a glance from those eyes that you keep lowered as if you were planning some dreadful deed, a handclasp long enough to establish the contact, long enough for the current to begin to flow. Don't you realize, subtle as you are, fool that you have suddenly become, the importance of a little gesture that will set you both free? . . .

"You should live your friendship a little, you should put into practice the principles of that exalted affection which you say cannot be satisfied among men, live it instead of singing its praises, you infernal New England prude. Your hands are skilful enough for anything except when it comes to friendship—hands that are so delicate when they pick a frail little flower and so clumsy when they lift this plant that thrusts its pale roots into you . . ."

When did biographer ever address his subject with such audacious frankness? But what if Bazalgette does break through the barriers of accepted biographical form and out into the freer atmosphere of impressionism! His search for truth is not therefore less sincere nor his presentations less true. If sometimes his ecstasy carries him up too high,—up beyond the darkening clouds,—these will soon separate, and Thoreau and his invisible counsellor will proceed on their journey.

MARETTE QUICK